HAMLET

EDITED BY W. J. ROLFE

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THE GHOST IN HAMLET (*T. R. Gould*)

SHAKESPEARE'S

TRAGEDY OF

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

EDITED, WITH NOTES

BY

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ILLUSTRATED

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HAMLET.
W. P. 8

PREFACE

THIS edition of *Hamlet*, first published in 1878, is now revised on the same general plan as the *Merchant of Venice* and other plays that have preceded it.

Most of the notes on *textual variations* have been either omitted or abridged. Teachers in secondary schools or in colleges who may wish to give more attention to this subject will of course make use of Dr. Furness's encyclopedic edition of the play, which in other ways also they will find indispensable.

I have likewise omitted most of the "Critical Comments" from the introduction and elsewhere, as the books from which they were taken are now generally accessible in public and school libraries. For these extracts I have substituted comments of my own, dealing mainly with the character of Hamlet and the problems of the play, which has been well called "the Sphinx of modern literature." Its deep mystery baffles us, but we return to it again and again in the vain hope of solving it. Some one has said that "a man ought, perhaps, to change his opinion concerning this drama once every decade during the first forty years of existence; it would, in most cases, be a good sign of increased culture and maturer intellect." While studying it for more than forty years, I may have modified my own opinion in some measure oftener than that; but since I became acquainted with the Klein-Werder theory I have been more and more inclined to believe that it substantially plucks out the heart of the

mystery. I have endeavoured to give a clear idea of this theory in the Appendix. Teachers and students who wish to know more about it, and to compare it with other theories, may be referred to Furness's second volume, where almost two hundred and fifty royal octavo pages are devoted to English, German, and other criticisms of the play.

The Notes have been carefully revised throughout, some being abridged, some expanded, and new ones added, including a considerable number in place of those referring to my editions of other plays. The book is now absolutely complete in itself.

I believe that teachers and students will prefer the new edition to the old one; but both can be used, without serious inconvenience, in the same class or club.

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INTRODUCTION TO HAMLET

THE HISTORY OF THE PLAY

THE earliest edition of *Hamlet*, so far as we know, appeared in quarto form in 1603; and the title-page informs us that it had "beene diverse times acted by his

Highnesse servants in the Cittie of London, as also in the two Vniversities of Cambridge and Oxford, and elsewhere."

In 1604, a second quarto was published, claiming to be "newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie."

A third quarto, reprinted from the second, appeared in 1605; a fourth in 1611; and later a fifth, which is undated. No other has been discovered that was issued during the life of Shakespeare or previous to the publication of the folio of 1623.

The text of the folio varies considerably from that of the quartos, and it has been thought that it might be derived from "some hitherto unknown quarto." It is not impossible that there may have been such a quarto. No copy of the quarto of 1603 was known until 1823, when one was found by Sir Henry Bunbury. A second was picked up in 1856 by a Dublin bookseller, who paid a shilling for it. The former, which lacks the last page, was afterwards sold to the Duke of Devonshire for £230; the latter, which wants the title-page, was bought by Halliwell-Phillipps for £120, and is now in the British Museum. If the folio text was not from a lost quarto, it was probably from a manuscript obtained by the editors from the theatre. The standard text of the play is chiefly made up by a collation of the second quarto and the folio.

The relation of the first quarto to the second has

been much disputed. Collier, White, and some other critics believe that the former is merely an imperfect report of the play as published in the latter; that it was printed, either from shorthand notes taken at the theatre, or from a stage-copy cut down for representation and perhaps corrupted by the insertion of stuff from an earlier play on the same subject. The second quarto, on the other hand, was an authorized edition of the play from "the true and perfect copy."

Other critics — among whom are Caldecott, Knight, Staunton, and Dyce — believe that the first quarto represents, though in a corrupt form, the first draught of the play, while the second gives it as remodeled and enlarged by the author. It is not necessary to suppose that the former was written near the time when it was published; it was more likely an early production of the poet. After the revision the original copy could be more easily obtained for surreptitious publication, and it may have been printed in haste to "head off" an authorized edition of the remodeled play.

Another theory, and a very plausible one, is that of Messrs. Clark and Wright, brought out in the "Clarendon Press" edition of the play; namely, "that there was an old play on the story of *Hamlet*, some portions of which are still preserved in the quarto of 1603; that about the year 1602 Shakespeare took this and began to remodel it, as he had done with other plays; that the quarto of 1603 represents the play after it had been retouched by him to a certain extent, but before his

alterations were complete; and that in the quarto of 1604 we have for the first time the *Hamlet* of Shakespeare."

The Sources of the Plot

There was certainly an old play on the subject of Hamlet, and some critics believe that it was an early work of Shakespeare's. It is far more probable, however, that (as Fleay, Sarrazin, Dowden, and others believe) Thomas Kyd was the author, and that it was "a companion piece to his *Spanish Tragedy* — itself a play of revenge — (a father's revenge for a murdered son, inverting the Hamlet theme); of violent passion bordering on distraction; including among the *dramatis personæ* a ghost; and presenting, like *Hamlet*, a play within a play" (Dowden). The first allusion to it that has been discovered is in an *Epistle* "To the Gentleman Students of both Universities," by Thomas Nash, prefixed to Greene's *Menaphon*, printed in 1589. Referring to the playwrights of that day, Nash says: "It is a common practice now a daies amongst a sort of shifting companions, that runne through every arte and thrive by none to leave the trade of *Noverint* whereto they were borne, and busie themselves with the indevours of art, that could scarcelie latinize their neckeverse if they should have neede; yet English Seneca read by candle-light yeeldes manie good sentences, as *Bloud is a beggar*, and so foorth: and if you intreate

him faire in a frostie morning, he will affoord you whole *Hamlets*, I should say Handfulls of tragical speaches."

In Henslowe's *Diary* the following entry occurs: "9 of June, 1594, Rd at hamlet . . . viiij^{s}" Five lines above the entry is this memorandum: "In the name of God Amen, beginninge at Newington, my Lord Admeralle and my Lorde chamberlen men, as foloweth, 1594." At this date, Shakespeare was one of the company of actors known as "the Lord Chamberlain's men."

Again, in Lodge's *Wits miserie and the Worlds madnesse*, published in 1596, we have an allusion to "y^{e} ghost which cried so miserally [*sic*] at y^{e} theator, like an oisterwife, *Hamlet reuenge*."

It is impossible to say what use Shakespeare made of this old English play, as it seems to be hopelessly lost. Of another source from which he probably derived his material we have better knowledge: namely, *The Hystorie of Hamblet*, translated from the *Histoires Tragiques* of Francis de Belleforest. The story of Hamlet is found in the fifth volume, which was printed at Paris in 1570. The English version was probably made soon after, though the only edition now extant is that of 1608.

The poet has followed the *Hystorie* in some of its main incidents — the murder of Hamlet's father by his uncle, the marriage of his mother with the murderer, his feigned madness, his killing of Polonius, his interview with his mother, his voyage to England, his return,

and his revenge — but not in the *dénouement*. In the *Hystorie* Hamlet, after his uncle's death, becomes King of Denmark, visits England again, marries two wives, by one of whom he is betrayed into the power of his maternal uncle, Wiglerus, and is finally slain in battle.

It may be added that Belleforest got the story from the *Historia Danica* of Saxo Grammaticus, written about the close of the 12th century, though the earliest existing edition of it is that of Paris, 1514.

General Comments on the Play

The mere bibliography of the literature of *Hamlet* would fill a volume. The amount that has been written about the play far exceeds that on any other of Shakespeare's works. Furness does not exaggerate when he says in the preface to his monumental edition: "No one of mortal mould (save Him 'whose blessed feet were nailed for our advantage to the bitter cross') ever trod this earth, commanding such absorbing interest as this Hamlet, this mere creation of a poet's brain. No syllable that he whispers, no word let fall by any one near him, but is caught and pondered as no words ever have been, except of Holy Writ. Upon no throne built by mortal hands has ever 'beat so fierce a light' as upon that airy fabric reared at Elsinore."

Of the countless attempts to pluck out the heart of Hamlet's mystery, that of Goethe (in *Wilhelm Meister*)

is one of the most famous, and has met with considerable favour among more recent critics. The gist of it may be stated very briefly. After quoting the ejaculation of the Prince at the close of his interview with the Ghost (i. 5. 189, 190), —

> "The time is out of joint ; O cursed spite,
> That ever I was born to set it right ! " —

Goethe continues thus : " In these words, I imagine, is the key to Hamlet's whole procedure, and to me it is clear that Shakespeare sought to depict a great deed laid upon a soul unequal to the performance of it. In this view I find the piece composed throughout. Here is an oak tree planted in a costly vase, which should have received into its bosom only lovely flowers ; the roots spread out, the vase is shivered to pieces.

" A beautiful, pure, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which makes the hero, sinks beneath a burden which it can neither bear nor throw off ; every duty is holy to him, — this too hard. The impossible is required of him, — not the impossible in itself, but the impossible to him. How he winds, turns, agonizes, advances, and recoils, ever reminded, ever reminding himself, and at last almost loses his purpose from his thoughts, without ever again recovering his peace of mind ! "

A more common view is that Hamlet's will is paralyzed by excess of intellect. This theory originated with Coleridge, who says : " We see a great, an almost

enormous intellectual activity, and a proportionate aversion to real action consequent upon it, with all its symptoms and accompanying qualities. Hamlet is brave and careless of death; but he vacillates from sensibility, and procrastinates from thought, and loses the power of action in the energy of resolve."

A far more satisfactory theory has been advanced more recently in Germany, to which Furness refers in the preface to his edition as follows: —

"The last theory of Hamlet's character which has arrested special attention in Germany by the bold and animated way in which it has been set forth by its chief expounder, Werder, was first proposed in strong terms by Klein. It sweeps aside every vestige of Goethe's explanation, with all theories akin to it. It affirms Hamlet to be a man of action, never at a loss, never wavering, taking in at once the position of affairs, adjusting himself thereto with admirable sagacity, and instantly acting with consummate tact as occasions require."

As Furness adds, "A theory so directly opposed to all accepted ideas of Hamlet claims a full exposition;" and he therefore gives more than sixteen pages of fine print to a translation of passages from Werder's *Vorlesungen über Shakespeare's Hamlet* (Berlin, 1875).

This theory is fully accepted by Furness himself, as by not a few of the recent editors and critics. Hudson, who in the first edition of *Shakespeare's Life, Art, and Characters* (1872) had taken the ground that insanity

was the real explanation of the character — that, "in plain terms, Hamlet is mad; . . . a derangement partial and occasional, paroxysms of wildness and fury alternating with intervals of serenity and composure" — adopts the Klein-Werder theory in the revised edition of his book, published in 1882. After referring to the various changes his views of Hamlet had undergone in the course of thirty-eight years, he states that he became acquainted with Werder's discussion of the subject through Furness's edition of the play. He adds: "This essay seemed to me then, and seems to me still, altogether the justest and most adequate analytic interpretation of the character that criticism has yet produced. I read the matter again and again, with intense avidity, and almost unalloyed satisfaction; feeling that there, for the first time, the real scope of the theme had been rightly seized and its contents properly discoursed."

Sidney Lee, the latest of Shakespeare's biographers, adheres to Coleridge's theory, regarding *Hamlet* as "mainly a psychological effort, a study of the reflective temperament in excess." The hero, he adds, is "a high-born youth of chivalric instincts and finely developed intellect, who, when stirred to avenge a desperate private wrong, is foiled by introspective workings of the brain that paralyze the will."

It is curious that no critic has noted the fact that the Klein-Werder theory of Hamlet's character was anticipated in an article on *Romeo and Juliet*, by George

Fletcher, which appeared in the *Westminster Review* for September, 1845. It was probably overlooked because it is a single paragraph in a paper upon another play. I give it here in full: —

"Against Hamlet the evil practices of earth, the suggestions of hell, and the enmity of Fortune, are literally and truly combined to perplex and to crush him; but the just harmony of his mental constitution,

> 'Where every god did seem to set his seal,
> To give the world assurance of a man,'

bears it out against 'the slings and arrows of outrageous Fortune,' — beaten and battered indeed, and finally broken, but *unswerving* to the last. And yet, up to this very hour, cannot the critics of this Shakespearian masterpiece — including even Goethe, and Schlegel, and Coleridge — notwithstanding that its hero is 'benetted round with villanies,' and has a preternatural embarrassment of the most horrible kind superadded — find any adequate source of his calamities but in what they represent as the 'morbid' disproportion of his own character — his 'excess' of reflection and imagination — his 'deficiency' of passion and of will. We may ere long find occasion to show[1] that Hamlet's consciousness of 'inauspicious stars,' so continually recurring throughout the piece, is as well grounded as that of Romeo himself, and that under *their* influence *alone*

[1] This indicates a purpose of writing an article on *Hamlet* which unfortunately was never carried out.

does he sink, — that with sensibility and imagination, with passion and will, with sympathy and self-devotion, and with 'the hand to dare,' no less than 'the will to do,' Shakespeare has studiously endowed him, — each in an ideally exalted degree, and all harmoniously combined into a character of perfect ideal strength and beauty."

A writer in the *Quarterly Review* (vol. lxxix., 1847, p. 333 fol.) also takes the view that Hamlet's inaction was not due to any defect of will. He says: —

"The motives which induce Hamlet to defer his revenge are still, and perhaps will ever remain, debatable ground. The favourite doctrine of late is, that the thinking part of Hamlet predominated over the active — that he was as weak and vacillating in performance as he was great in speculation. If this theory were borne out by his general conduct, it would no doubt amply account for his procrastination; but there is nothing to countenance and much to refute the idea. Shakespeare has endowed him with a vast energy of will. There could be no sterner resolve than to abandon every purpose of existence that he might devote himself unfettered to his revenge; nor was ever resolution better observed. He breaks through his passion for Ophelia, and keeps it down, under the most trying circumstances, with such inflexible firmness that an eloquent critic has seriously questioned whether his attachment was real. The determination of his character appears again at the death of Polonius. An indecisive mind would have been shocked, if not terri-

fied, at the deed. Hamlet dismisses him with a few contemptuous words as a man would brush away a fly. He talks with even greater indifference of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, whom he sends 'to sudden death, not shriving-time allowed.' He has on these, and, indeed, on all occasions, a short and absolute way which only belongs to resolute souls. The features developed in his very hesitation to kill the King are inconsistent with the notion that his hand refuses to perform what his head contrives. He is always trying to persuade himself into a conviction that it is his duty, instead of seeking for evasions.[1] He is seized with a savage joy when the play supplies him with indubitable proof of his uncle's guilt. His language then to Horatio is: —

> 'Is 't not perfect conscience
> To quit him with this arm ?'

[1] "His reasons for not killing the King when he is praying have been held to be an excuse. But if Shakespeare had anticipated the criticism, he could not have guarded against it more effectually. Hamlet has just uttered the soliloquy —

> 'Now could I drink hot blood,
> And do such bitter business as the day
> Would quake to look on.'

In this frame he passes his uncle's closet, and is for once, at least, equal to any emergency. His first thought is to kill him at his devotions; his second, that in that case Claudius will go to heaven. Instantly his father's sufferings rise into his mind; he contrasts the happy future of the criminal with the purgatory of the victim, and the contemplation exasperates him into a genuine desire for a fuller revenge. The threat relieves him from the reproach of inactivity, and he falls back into his former self."

He wants, it is clear, neither will nor nerve to strike the blow. There is perhaps one supposition that will satisfy all the phenomena, and it has, to us, the recommendation that we think it is the solution suggested by Shakespeare himself. Hamlet, in a soliloquy, charges the delay on —

> 'Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
> Of thinking too precisely on th' event.'

The oblivion is merely the effect of the primary cause — 'the craven scruple' — the conscience which renders him a coward. His uncle, after all, is king; he is the brother of his father, and the husband of his mother, and it was inevitable that he should shrink, in his cooler moments, from becoming his assassin. His hatred to his uncle, who has disgraced his family and disappointed his ambition, gives him personal inducements to revenge, which further blunt his purpose by leading him to doubt the purity of his motives. The admonition of the Ghost to him is, not to taint his mind in the prosecution of his end; and no sooner has the Ghost vanished than Hamlet, invoking the aid of supernatural powers, exclaims: —

> 'O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
> And shall I couple hell? — O fie!'

But the hell, whose support he rejects, is forever returning to his mind and startling his conscience. It is this that makes him wish for the confirmation of the play, for

evil spirits may have abused him. It is this which begets the apathy he terms oblivion, for inaction affords relief to doubt. It is this which produces his inconsistencies, for conscience calls him different ways, and when he obeys in one direction he is haunted by the feeling that he should have gone in the other. If he contemplated the performance of a deed which looks outwardly more like murder than judicial retribution, he trembles lest, after all, he should be perpetrating an unnatural crime; or if, on the other hand, he turns to view his uncle's misdeeds, he fancies there is more of cowardly scrupulosity than justice in his backwardness, and he abounds in self-reproaches at the weakness of his hesitation. And thus he might forever have halted between two opinions, if the King himself, by filling up the measure of his iniquities, had not swept away his scruples."

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CLAUDIUS, king of Denmark.
HAMLET, son to the late, and nephew to the present king.
POLONIUS, lord chamberlain.
HORATIO, friend to Hamlet.
LAERTES, son to Polonius.
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, OSRIC, } courtiers.
A Gentleman,
A Priest.
MARCELLUS, BERNARDO, } officers.
FRANCISCO, a soldier.
REYNALDO, servant to Polonius.
Players.
Two Clowns, grave-diggers.
FORTINBRAS, prince of Norway.
A Captain.
English Ambassadors.

GERTRUDE, queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet.
OPHELIA, daughter to Polonius.

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants.

Ghost of Hamlet's father.

SCENE: *Elsinore.*

PLATFORM AT ELSINORE

ACT I

SCENE I. *Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle*

FRANCISCO *at his post. Enter to him* BERNARDO

Bernardo. Who 's there?

Francisco. Nay, answer me; stand, and unfold yourself.

Bernardo. Long live the king!

Francisco. Bernardo?

Bernardo. He.

Francisco. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Bernardo. 'T is now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.

Francisco. For this relief much thanks; 't is bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Bernardo. Have you had quiet guard?

Francisco. Not a mouse stirring.

Bernardo. Well, good night.
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Francisco. I think I hear them. — Stand, ho! Who is there?

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS

Horatio. Friends to this ground.

Marcellus. And liegemen to the Dane.

Francisco. Give you good night.

Marcellus. O, farewell, honest soldier;
Who hath reliev'd you?

Francisco. Bernardo has my place.
Give you good night. [*Exit.*

Marcellus. Holla! Bernardo!

Bernardo. Say, —
What, is Horatio there?

Horatio. A piece of him.

Bernardo. Welcome, Horatio; — welcome, good Marcellus.

Marcellus. What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

Bernardo. I have seen nothing.

Marcellus. Horatio says 't is but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us;
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night,
That if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

Horatio. Tush, tush, 't will not appear.

Bernardo. Sit down awhile;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we two nights have seen.

Horatio. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Bernardo. Last night of all
When yond same star that 's westward from the pole
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one, —

Enter GHOST

Marcellus. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

Bernardo. In the same figure, like the king that 's dead.

Marcellus. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

Bernardo. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Horatio. Most like; it harrows me with fear and wonder.

Bernardo. It would be spoke to.

Marcellus. Question it, Horatio.

Horatio. What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak!

Marcellus. It is offended.

Bernardo. See, it stalks away! 50

Horatio. Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!
[*Exit Ghost.*

Marcellus. 'T is gone, and will not answer.

Bernardo. How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale;
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on 't?

Horatio. Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Marcellus. Is it not like the king?

Horatio. As thou art to thyself.
Such was the very armour he had on 60
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'T is strange.

Marcellus. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.
Horatio. In what particular thought to work I know not;
But in the gross and scope of my opinion
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.
Marcellus. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land,
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war;
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week;
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day.
Who is 't that can inform me?
Horatio. That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet—
For so this side of our known world esteem'd him—
Did slay this Fortinbras, who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry.
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror;

Against the which a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king, which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant
And carriage of the article design'd,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in 't, which is no other —
As it doth well appear unto our state —
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsative, those foresaid lands
So by his father lost; and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch, and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

Bernardo. I think it be no other but e'en so.
Well may it sort that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch, so like the king
That was and is the question of these wars.

Horatio. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets, —
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star

Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.
And even the like precurse of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates
And prologue to the omen coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen. —
But soft, behold! lo, where it comes again!

Re-enter GHOST

I 'll cross it, though it blast me. — Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound or use of voice,
Speak to me;
If there be any good thing to be done
That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
Speak to me;
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak!
Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
[*The cock crows.*
Speak of it; stay, and speak! — Stop it, Marcellus.

Marcellus. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?

Horatio. Do, if it will not stand.

Bernardo. 'T is here!

Horatio. 'T is here!

Marcellus. 'T is gone! [*Exit Ghost.*

We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Bernardo. It was about to speak when the cock crew.

Horatio. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine; and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.

Marcellus. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit can walk abroad,
The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Horatio. So have I heard and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.
Break we our watch up, and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,

This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Marcellus. Let 's do 't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *A Room of State in the Castle*

Enter the King, Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes, Voltimand, Cornelius, Lords, *and* Attendants

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
Have we, as 't were with a defeated joy, — 10
With one auspicious and one dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole, —
Taken to wife; nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,

Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother. So much for him.
Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting.
Thus much the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
His further gait herein, in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject; and we here despatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway,
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king more than the scope
Of these dilated articles allow.
Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

Cornelius. } In that and all things will we show our
Voltimand. } duty.

King. We doubt it nothing; heartily farewell.—
[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*

And now, Laertes, what 's the news with you?
You told us of some suit; what is 't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,

And lose your voice; what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laertes. Dread my lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation,
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? — What says Polonius?

Polonius. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
By laboursome petition, and at last
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent;
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will! —
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son, —

Hamlet. [*Aside*] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Hamlet. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not for ever with thy vailed lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust.
Thou know'st 't is common; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.
Hamlet. Ay, madam, it is common.
Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?
Hamlet. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not 'seems.'
'T is not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly. These indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play,
But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.
King. 'T is sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father,
But, you must know, your father lost a father;
That father lost lost his, and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow. But to persever
In obstinate condolement is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 't is unmanly grief;
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,

A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd.
For what we know must be and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we in our peevish opposition
Take it to heart? Fie! 't is a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd; whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died to-day,
'This must be so.' We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father; for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne,
And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire;
And we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet.
I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

Hamlet. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 't is a loving and a fair reply;
Be as ourself in Denmark. — Madam, come.
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart; in grace whereof,

No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,
Respeaking earthly thunder. — Come away.
[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

Hamlet. O that this too, too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on 't! O fie! 't is an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
But two months dead! nay, not so much, not two!
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on; and yet, within a month —
Let me not think on 't — Frailty, thy name is woman! —
A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears, — why she, even she —
O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer — married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my father

Than I to Hercules. Within a month?
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married. O most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to good. —
But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, *and* BERNARDO

Horatio. Hail to your lordship!
Hamlet. I am glad to see you well.
Horatio, — or I do forget myself.
Horatio. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.
Hamlet. Sir, my good friend; I 'll change that name with you.
And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio? —
Marcellus?
Marcellus. My good lord —
Hamlet. I am very glad to see you. — [*To Bernardo.*] Good even, sir. —
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?
Horatio. A truant disposition, good my lord.
Hamlet. I would not hear your enemy say so,
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself; I know you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore?
We 'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

Horatio. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Hamlet. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Horatio. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Hamlet. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!
My father! — methinks I see my father.

Horatio. O where, my lord?

Hamlet. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Horatio. I saw him once; he was a goodly king.

Hamlet. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

Horatio. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Hamlet. Saw? who?

Horatio. My lord, the king your father.

Hamlet. The king my father!

Horatio. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Hamlet. For God's love, let me hear.

Horatio. Two nights together had these gentlemen,

Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead vast and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe,
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them. Thrice he walk'd
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did,
And I with them the third night kept the watch;
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes. I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.

Hamlet. But where was this?

Marcellus. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Hamlet. Did you not speak to it?

Horatio. My lord, I did,
But answer made it none; yet once methought
It lifted up it head and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak,
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away
And vanish'd from our sight.

Hamlet. 'T is very strange.

Horatio. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 't is true,

And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.

Hamlet. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me. Hold you the watch to-night?

Marcellus. } We do, my lord.
Bernardo. }

Hamlet. Arm'd, say you?

Marcellus. } Arm'd, my lord.
Bernardo. }

Hamlet. From top to toe?

Marcellus. } My lord, from head to foot.
Bernardo. }

Hamlet. Then saw you not his face?

Horatio. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.

Hamlet. What, look'd he frowningly?

Horatio. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

Hamlet. Pale, or red?

Horatio. Nay, very pale.

Hamlet. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Horatio. Most constantly.

Hamlet. I would I had been there.

Horatio. It would have much amaz'd you.

Hamlet. Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?

Horatio. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Marcellus. } Longer, longer.
Bernardo. }

Horatio. Not when I saw 't.

Hamlet. His beard was grizzled? no?
Horatio. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.
Hamlet. I 'll watch to-night;
Perchance 't will walk again.
Horatio. I warrant it will.
Hamlet. If it assume my noble father's person,
I 'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue.
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well;
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I 'll visit you.
All. Our duty to your honour.
Hamlet. Your loves, as mine to you; farewell. —
[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*
My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play. Would the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul; foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.
[*Exit.*

Scene III. *A Room in Polonius's House*

Enter Laertes *and* Ophelia

Laertes. My necessaries are embark'd; farewell.
And, sister, as the winds give benefit

And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Ophelia. Do you doubt that?

Laertes. For Hamlet and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.

Ophelia. No more but so?

Laertes. Think it no more;
For nature crescent does not grow alone
In thews and bulk, but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
The virtue of his will; but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own,
For he himself is subject to his birth.
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself, for on his choice depends
The safety and health of this whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed, which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.

Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmaster'd importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon.
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes;
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd,
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary then; best safety lies in fear;
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Ophelia. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads
And recks not his own rede.

Laertes. O, fear me not.
I stay too long; but here my father comes.

Enter Polonius

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Polonius. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!
And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but, being in,
Bear 't that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are most select and generous, chief in that.
Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day.
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell; my blessing season this in thee!

Laertes. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Polonius. The time invites you; go, your servants tend.

Laertes. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Ophelia. 'T is in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laertes. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Polonius. What is 't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Ophelia. So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

Polonius. Marry, well bethought. 90
'T is told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you, and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous;
If it be so — as so 't is put on me,
And that in way of caution — I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly
As it behoves my daughter and your honour.
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Ophelia. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me. 100

Polonius. Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Ophelia. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Polonius. Marry, I 'll teach you; think yourself a baby,
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay

Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or — not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus — you 'll tender me a fool.

Ophelia. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love
In honourable fashion.

Polonius. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

Ophelia. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Polonius. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows; these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
You must not take for fire. From this time
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments at a higher rate
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young,
And with a larger tether may he walk
Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,
Not of that dye which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds,
The better to beguile. This is for all:
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure

As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to 't, I charge you; come your ways.
Ophelia. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *The Platform*

Enter Hamlet, Horatio, *and* Marcellus

Hamlet. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.
Horatio. It is a nipping and an eager air.
Hamlet. What hour now?
Horatio. I think it lacks of twelve.
Hamlet. No, it is struck.
Horatio. Indeed? I heard it not; it then draws near the season
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.
[*A flourish of trumpets and ordnance shot off within.*
What does this mean, my lord?
Hamlet. The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering upspring reels;
And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.
Horatio. Is it a custom?
Hamlet. Ay, marry is 't;
But to my mind, though I am native here
And to the manner born, it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.

This heavy-headed revel east and west
Makes us traduc'd and tax'd of other nations.
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition ; and indeed it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So, oft it chances in particular men
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth — wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin —
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,
Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausive manners, that these men,
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star, —
Their virtues else — be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo —
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault ; the dram of eale
Doth all the noble substance of a doubt
To his own scandal.

Horatio. Look, my lord, it comes !

Enter GHOST

Hamlet. Angels and ministers of grace defend us ! —
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,

Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee: I 'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father! royal Dane, O, answer me!
Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature
So horridly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

[*Ghost beckons Hamlet.*

Horatio. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Marcellus. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground;
But do not go with it.

Horatio. No, by no means.

Hamlet. It will not speak; then I will follow it.

Horatio. Do not, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And for my soul, what can it do to that,

Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again; I 'll follow it.
Horatio. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness? Think of it;
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.
Hamlet. It waves me still. —
Go on; I 'll follow thee.
Marcellus. You shall not go, my lord.
Hamlet. Hold off your hands!
Horatio. Be rul'd; you shall not go.
Hamlet. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.
Still am I call'd. — Unhand me, gentlemen.
By heaven, I 'll make a ghost of him that lets me!
I say, away! — Go on; I 'll follow thee.
[*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.*
Horatio. He waxes desperate with imagination.
Marcellus. Let 's follow; 't is not fit thus to obey him.

Horatio. Have after. — To what issue will this come?

Marcellus. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Horatio. Heaven will direct it.

Marcellus. Nay, let 's follow him. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. *Another Part of the Platform*

Enter Ghost *and* Hamlet

Hamlet. Where wilt thou lead me? speak; I 'll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Hamlet. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Hamlet. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Hamlet. Speak; I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Hamlet. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid

To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand an end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine;
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love —

Hamlet. O God!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murther.

Hamlet. Murther!

Ghost. Murther most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Hamlet. Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
'T is given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd; but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

Hamlet. O my prophetic soul!
My uncle!
Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,—
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
O Hamlet, what a falling off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage, and to decline
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!
But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.
But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air;
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distilment, whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset

And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood; so did it mine,
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd;
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And gins to pale his uneffectual fire;
Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me. [*Exit.*

Hamlet. O all you host of heaven! O earth! what else?
And shall I couple hell? O, fie! Hold, hold, my heart;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee!

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
I 'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there,
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter; yes, by heaven!
O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables, — meet it is I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least I 'm sure it may be so in Denmark. — [*Writing.*
So, uncle, there you are. — Now to my word:
It is 'Adieu, adieu! remember me.'
I have sworn 't.

Marcellus. } [*Within*] My lord, my lord!
Horatio. }

Marcellus. [*Within*] Lord Hamlet!

Horatio. [*Within*] Heaven secure him!

Hamlet. So be it!

Horatio. [*Within*] Hillo, ho, ho, my lord!

Hamlet. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS

Marcellus. How is 't, my noble lord?

Horatio. What news, my lord?

Hamlet. O, wonderful!

Horatio. Good my lord, tell it.
Hamlet. No; you will reveal it.
Horatio. Not I, my lord, by heaven.
Marcellus. Nor I, my lord.
Hamlet. How say you, then; would heart of man once think it?
But you 'll be secret?
Horatio. } Ay, by heaven, my lord.
Marcellus. }
Hamlet. There 's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark
But he 's an arrant knave.
Horatio. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this.
Hamlet. Why, right; you are i' the right,
And so without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:
You, as your business and desire shall point you, —
For every man has business and desire,
Such as it is, — and for mine own poor part,
Look you, I 'll go pray.
Horatio. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.
Hamlet. I 'm sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, faith, heartily.
Horatio. There 's no offence, my lord.
Hamlet. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,

It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you;
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster 't as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Horatio. What is 't, my lord? we will.

Hamlet. Never make known what you have seen to-night.

Horatio. } My lord, we will not.
Marcellus. }

Hamlet. Nay, but swear 't.

Horatio. In faith,
My lord, not I.

Marcellus. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Hamlet. Upon my sword.

Marcellus. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Hamlet. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.

Hamlet. Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, truepenny? —
Come on — you hear this fellow in the cellarage —
Consent to swear.

Horatio. Propose the oath, my lord.

Hamlet. Never to speak of this that you have seen.
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.

Hamlet. Hic et ubique? then we'll shift our ground. —
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword,

Never to speak of this that you have heard.
Swear by my sword.
Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.
Hamlet. Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so fast?
A worthy pioner! — Once more remove, good friends.
Horatio. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!
Hamlet. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
But come;
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself, —
As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on, —
That you at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As 'Well, well, we know,' or 'We could, an if we would,'
Or 'If we list to speak,' or 'There be, an if they might,'
Or such ambiguous giving-out, to note
That you know aught of me: this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,
Swear.
Ghost. [*Beneath*] Swear.
Hamlet. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! — So gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you;
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is

May do, to express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint; — O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right! —
Nay, come, let 's go together. [*Exeunt.*

PALACE AT ROSENBERG

ACT II

SCENE I. *A Room in Polonius's House*

Enter POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO

Polonius. Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

Reynaldo. I will, my lord.

Polonius. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make inquire
Of his behaviour.

Reynaldo. My lord, I did intend it.

Polonius. Marry, well said, very well said. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris,
And how, and who; what means, and where they keep;
What company, at what expense; and finding
By this encompassment and drift of question
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it;
Take you, as 't were, some distant knowledge of him,
As thus, 'I know his father and his friends,
And in part him,' — do you mark this, Reynaldo?

Reynaldo. Ay, very well, my lord.

Polonius. 'And in part him, but' you may say 'not well;
But, if 't be he I mean, he 's very wild,
Addicted' so and so: and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him, — take heed of that, —
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Reynaldo. As gaming, my lord.

Polonius. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing; you may go so far.

Reynaldo. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Polonius. Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.

You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency, —
That 's not my meaning, — but breathe his faults so quaintly
That they may seem the taints of liberty,
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.

Reynaldo. But, my good lord, —

Polonius. Wherefore should you do this?

Reynaldo. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

Polonius. Marry, sir, here 's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant.
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 't were a thing a little soil'd i' the working,
Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assur'd
He closes with you in this consequence:
'Good sir,' or so, or 'friend,' or 'gentleman,'
According to the phrase or the addition
Of man and country.

Reynaldo. Very good, my lord.

Polonius. And then, sir, does he this — he does —

what was I about to say? By the mass, I was about to say something; where did I leave?

Reynaldo. At 'closes in the consequence,' at 'friend or so,' and 'gentleman.'

Polonius. At 'closes in the consequence,' ay, marry;
He closes thus: 'I know the gentleman;
I saw him yesterday, or t' other day,
Or then, or then, with such, or such, and, as you say,
There was he gaming, there o'ertook in 's rouse,
There falling out at tennis;' or perchance,
'I saw him enter such a house of sale,'
Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.
See you now;
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth,
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlasses and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out;
So, by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?

Reynaldo. My lord, I have.

Polonius. God be wi' you; fare you well.

Reynaldo. Good my lord!

Polonius. Observe his inclination in yourself.

Reynaldo. I shall, my lord.

Polonius. And let him ply his music.

Reynaldo. Well, my lord.

Polonius. Farewell! [*Exit Reynaldo.*

Enter Ophelia

How now, Ophelia! what 's the matter?

Ophelia. O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

Polonius. With what, i' the name of God?

Ophelia. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ankle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors, — he comes before me.

Polonius. Mad for thy love?

Ophelia. My lord, I do not know;
But truly, I do fear it.

Polonius. What said he?

Ophelia. He took me by the wrist and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk

And end his being. That done, he lets me go;
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes,
For out o' doors he went without their help,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.
Polonius. Come, go with me; I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings,
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry, —
What, have you given him any hard words of late?
Ophelia. No, my good lord, but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters and denied
His access to me.
Polonius. That hath made him mad.
I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
I had not quoted him. I fear'd he did but trifle
And meant to wrack thee; but beshrew my jealousy!
By heaven, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king.
This must be known, which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide than hate to utter love. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *A Room in the Castle*

Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, *and* Attendants

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
Sith nor the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of. I entreat you both
That, being of so young days brought up with him,
And sith so neighbour'd to his youth and humour,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time; so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus,
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you,
And sure I am two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry and good will
As to expend your time with us awhile.

For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Rosencrantz. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guildenstern. But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz;
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son. — Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guildenstern. Heavens make our presence and our practices
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, amen!

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and some Attendants.*

Enter POLONIUS

Polonius. The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Polonius. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God and to my gracious king;
And I do think, or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath us'd to do, that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Polonius. Give first admittance to the ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.— [*Exit Polonius.*

He tells me, my sweet queen, that he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main,—
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

King. Well, we shall sift him.—

Re-enter POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS

Welcome, my good friends!
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Voltimand. Most fair return of greetings and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies, which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack,
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness; whereat griev'd,
That so his sickness, age, and impotence

Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests
On Fortinbras, which he, in brief, obeys,
Receives rebuke from Norway, and in fine
Makes vow before his uncle never more
To give the assay of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,
And his commission to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack;
With an entreaty, herein further shown,
[*Giving a paper.*
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise,
On such regards of safety and allowance
As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well;
And at our more consider'd time we 'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business.
Meantime we thank you for your well-took labour.
Go to your rest; at night we 'll feast together.
Most welcome home! [*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*

Polonius. This business is well ended. —
My liege, and madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad;

Mad call I it, for, to define true madness,
What is 't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Polonius. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 't is true; 't is true 't is pity,
And pity 't is 't is true, — a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him, then; and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause.
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend.
I have a daughter — have while she is mine —
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this; now gather, and surmise.
[Reads] '*To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia,*' —
That 's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; 'beautified' is a vile phrase, — but you shall hear. Thus:
[Reads] '*In her excellent white bosom, these, etc.*'

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Polonius. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.

[Reads] '*Doubt thou the stars are fire;*
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love.

'O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers. I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.

'Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, HAMLET.'

This in obedience hath my daughter shown me,
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Receiv'd his love?

Polonius. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Polonius. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing —
As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me — what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk or table-book,
Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb,
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight,
What might you think? No, I went round to work,
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
'Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star;
This must not be;' and then I precepts gave her, —
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.

Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulsed — a short tale to make —
Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
Thence to a lightness, and by this declension
Into the madness wherein now he raves
And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think 't is this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Polonius. Hath there been such a time — I 'd fain know that —

That I have positively said "'T is so,'
When it prov'd otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Polonius. [*Pointing to his head and shoulder*] Take this from this, if this be otherwise.
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further?

Polonius. You know, sometimes he walks four hours together
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does indeed.

Polonius. At such a time I 'll loose my daughter to him.
Be you and I behind an arras then.
Mark the encounter; if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,

Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.

King. We will try it.

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

Polonius. Away, I do beseech you, both away;
I 'll board him presently. —

[*Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.*

Enter HAMLET, *reading*

O, give me leave;

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Hamlet. Well, God-a-mercy.

Polonius. Do you know me, my lord?

Hamlet. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Polonius. Not I, my lord.

Hamlet. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Polonius. Honest, my lord!

Hamlet. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Polonius. That 's very true, my lord.

Hamlet. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion, — Have you a daughter?

Polonius. I have, my lord.

Hamlet. Let her not walk i' the sun; conception is a blessing, but not as your daughter may conceive. — Friend, look to 't.

Polonius. [*Aside*] How say you by that? Still

harping on my daughter; yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger; he is far gone, far gone; and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I 'll speak to him again. — What do you read, my lord?

Hamlet. Words, words, words.

Polonius. What is the matter, my lord?

Hamlet. Between who?

Polonius. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Hamlet. Slanders, sir, for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams; all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down, for you yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

Polonius. [*Aside*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't. — Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Hamlet. Into my grave?

Polonius. Indeed, that is out o' the air. — [*Aside*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. — My hon-

ourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Hamlet. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

Polonius. Fare you well, my lord.

Hamlet. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN

Polonius. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

Rosencrantz. [*To Polonius*] God save you, sir! [*Exit Polonius.*

Guildenstern. My honoured lord!

Rosencrantz. My most dear lord!

Hamlet. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? — Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Rosencrantz. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guildenstern. Happy, in that we are not over-happy; On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Hamlet. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Rosencrantz. Neither, my lord.

Hamlet. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours? What 's the news?

Rosencrantz. None, my lord, but that the world 's grown honest.

Hamlet. Then is doomsday near . but your news is not true. Let me question more in particular; what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guildenstern. Prison, my lord!

Hamlet. Denmark 's a prison.

Rosencrantz. Then is the world one.

Hamlet. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one o' the worst.

Rosencrantz. We think not so, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, then 't is none to you, for there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so; to me it is a prison.

Rosencrantz. Why, then your ambition makes it one; 't is too narrow for your mind.

Hamlet. O God, I could be bounded in a nut-shell, and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guildenstern. Which dreams indeed are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Hamlet. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Rosencrantz. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Hamlet. Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Rosencrantz. } We 'll wait upon you.
Guildenstern. }

Hamlet. No such matter; I will not sort you with the rest of my servants, for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Rosencrantz. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Hamlet. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks, but I thank you; and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me. Come, come; nay, speak.

Guildenstern. What should we say, my lord?

Hamlet. Why, any thing but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour. I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

Rosencrantz. To what end, my lord?

Hamlet. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

Rosencrantz. [*Aside to Guildenstern*] What say you?

Hamlet. [*Aside*] Nay, then I have an eye of you. — If you love me, hold not off.

Guildenstern. My lord, we were sent for.

Hamlet. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late — but wherefore I know not — lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, — why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me; no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Rosencrantz. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Hamlet. Why did you laugh then, when I said 'man delights not me'?

Rosencrantz. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall

receive from you; we coted them on the way, and hither are they coming to offer you service.

Hamlet. He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' the sere; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for 't. What players are they?

Rosencrantz. Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Hamlet. How chances it they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Rosencrantz. I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Hamlet. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? are they so followed?

Rosencrantz. No, indeed, are they not.

Hamlet. How comes it? do they grow rusty?

Rosencrantz. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace, but there is, sir, an aery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for 't; these are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages — so they call them — that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills and dare scarce come thither.

Hamlet. What, are they children? who maintains

'em? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players — as it is most like, if their means are no better — their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Rosencrantz. Faith, there has been much to-do on both sides, and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy; there was for a while no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Hamlet. Is 't possible?

Guildenstern. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Hamlet. Do the boys carry it away?

Rosencrantz. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.

Hamlet. It is not very strange; for mine uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats apiece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of trumpets within.*

Guildenstern. There are the players.

Hamlet. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come; the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony. Let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players, which, I tell

you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome; but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

Guildenstern. In what, my dear lord?

Hamlet. I am but mad north-north-west; when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Enter POLONIUS.

Polonius. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Hamlet. Hark you, Guildenstern, — and you too, — at each ear a hearer: that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

Rosencrantz. Happily he's the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

Hamlet. I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it. — You say right, sir: o' Monday morning; 't was so indeed.

Polonius. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Hamlet. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome, —

Polonius. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Hamlet. Buz, buz!

Polonius. Upon mine honour, —

Hamlet. Then came each actor on his ass, —

Polonius. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited; Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too

light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

Hamlet. O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

Polonius. What treasure had he, my lord?

Hamlet. Why,

'One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved passing well.'

Polonius. [*Aside*] Still on my daughter.

Hamlet. Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

Polonius. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Hamlet. Nay, that follows not.

Polonius. What follows, then, my lord?

Hamlet. Why,

'As by lot, God wot,'

and then, you know,

'It came to pass, as most like it was,' —

the first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for look, where my abridgments come. —

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all. I am glad to see ye well. Welcome, good friends. — O, my old friend! thy face is valanced since I saw thee last; comest thou to beard me in Denmark? — What, my young lady and mistress! By'r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like

a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. — Masters, you are all welcome. We 'll e'en to 't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see; we 'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1 *Player.* What speech, my lord?

Hamlet. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once, for the play, I remember, pleased not the million. 'T was caviare to the general; but it was — as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine — an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation, but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved; 't was Æneas' tale to Dido, and thereabout of it especially where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line, — let me see, let me see —

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast, —

't is not so: — it begins with 'Pyrrhus.'

The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd

With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total gules, horridly trick'd
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To their lord's murther. Roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks.

So, proceed you.

Polonius. Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.

1 *Player.* Anon he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command. Unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear; for, lo! his sword,
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick.
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,
And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region; so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work,

And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour forg'd for proof eterne
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven
As low as to the fiends!

Polonius. This is too long.

Hamlet. It shall to the barber's, with your beard. — Prithee, say on. — He 's for a jig or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps. — Say on; come to Hecuba.

1 *Player.* But who, O, who had seen the mobled queen —

Hamlet. 'The mobled queen?'

Polonius. That 's good; 'mobled queen' is good.

1 *Player.* Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames
With bisson rheum; a clout about that head
Where late the diadem stood; and for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up.
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd;
But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made —
Unless things mortal move them not at all —
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven
And passion in the gods.

Polonius. Look, whether he has not turned his colour and has tears in 's eyes. — Pray you, no more.

Hamlet. 'T is well, I 'll have thee speak out the rest soon. — Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time; after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.

Polonius. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Hamlet. God's bodykins, man, much better! Use every man after his desert, and who should scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity; the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Polonius. Come, sirs.

Hamlet. Follow him, friends; we 'll hear a play to-morrow. — [*Exit Polonius with all the Players but the First.*] Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the Murther of Gonzago?

1 *Player.* Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. We 'll ha 't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines which I would set down and insert in 't, could you not?

1 *Player.* Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. Very well. Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. — [*Exit Player.*] My good

friends, I 'll leave you till night; you are welcome to Elsinore.

Rosencrantz. Good my lord!

Hamlet. Ay, so, God be wi' ye! — [*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*] Now I am alone.
O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit
That from her working all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What 's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears.
Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?

Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? who does me this?
Ha!
'Swounds, I should take it; for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
O vengeance!
Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murther'd,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!
Fie upon 't! foh! About, my brain! I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a play
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murther, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I 'll have these players
Play something like the murther of my father
Before mine uncle. I 'll observe his looks;
I 'll tent him to the quick; if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil; and the devil hath power

To assume a pleasing shape, yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me. I 'll have grounds
More relative than this; the play 's the thing
Wherein I 'll catch the conscience of the king. [*Exit.*

DANISH STANDARD AND ARMS

ACT III

SCENE I. *A Room in the Castle*

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN

King. And can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Rosencrantz. He does confess he feels himself distracted,
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guildenstern. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,

But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Rosencrantz. Most like a gentleman.

Guildenstern. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Rosencrantz. Niggard of question, but of our demands
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Rosencrantz. Madam, it so fell out that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way; of these we told him,
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it. They are about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Polonius. 'T is most true;
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd. —
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Rosencrantz. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 't were by accident, may here

Affront Ophelia.
Her father and myself, lawful espials,
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge,
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,
If 't be the affliction of his love or no
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you. —
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness; so shall I hope your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Ophelia. Madam, I wish it may. [*Exit Queen.*

Polonius. Ophelia, walk you here. — Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves. — [*To Ophelia*] Read on this book;
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this —
'T is too much prov'd — that with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. [*Aside*] O, 't is too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word.
O heavy burthen!

Polonius. I hear him coming; let 's withdraw, my lord. [*Exeunt King and Polonius.*

Enter HAMLET

Hamlet. To be, or not to be, — that is the question:
Whether 't is nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing end them? To die, — to sleep, —
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, — 't is a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, — to sleep, —
To sleep! perchance to dream! ay, there 's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil
Must give us pause. There 's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,

And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action. — Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia! — Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.

Ophelia. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

Hamlet. I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

Ophelia. My lord, I have remembrances of yours
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.

Hamlet. No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

Ophelia. My honour'd lord, I know right well you did,
And with them words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich; their perfume lost,
Take these again, for to the noble mind
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Hamlet. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Ophelia. My lord?

Hamlet. Are you fair?

Ophelia. What means your lordship?

Hamlet. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Ophelia. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Hamlet. Ay, truly, for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness; this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Ophelia. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Hamlet. You should not have believed me, for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it; I loved you not.

Ophelia. I was the more deceived.

Hamlet. Get thee to a nunnery; why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where 's your father?

Ophelia. At home, my lord.

Hamlet. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in 's own house. Farewell.

Ophelia. [*Aside*] O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Hamlet. If thou dost marry, I 'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go; farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

Ophelia. [*Aside*] O heavenly powers, restore him!

Hamlet. I have heard of your paintings, too, well enough; God has given you one face, and you make yourselves another; you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I 'll no more on 't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit.*

Ophelia. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh,
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth

Blasted with ecstasy. O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Enter KING *and* POLONIUS

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There 's something in his soul
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood,
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger, which for to prevent
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute.
Haply the seas and countries different
With variable objects shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on 't?

Polonius. It shall do well; but yet do I believe
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. — How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all. — My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief; let her be round with him,
And I 'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,

To England send him, or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so;
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *A Hall in the Castle*

Enter Hamlet *and* Players

Hamlet. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise. I could have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

1 *Player.* I warrant your honour.

Hamlet. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance,

that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 *Player.* I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

Hamlet. O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered. That 's villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.—

[*Exeunt Players.*

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN

How now, my lord! will the king hear this piece of work?

Polonius. And the queen too, and that presently.

Hamlet. Bid the players make haste. — [*Exit Polonius.*]

Will you two help to hasten them?

Rosencrantz. } We will, my lord.
Guildenstern. }

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Hamlet. What ho! Horatio!

Enter HORATIO

Horatio. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Hamlet. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Horatio. O, my dear lord, —

Hamlet. Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election

Hath seal'd thee for herself, for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hath ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee. — Something too much of this. —
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle; if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

Horatio. Well, my lord;
If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Hamlet. They are coming to the play; I must be idle.
Get you a place.

Danish march. A flourish. Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and others*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Hamlet. Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish. I eat the air, promise-crammed; you cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Hamlet. No, nor mine now. — [*To Polonius*] My lord, you played once i' the university, you say? 100

Polonius. That did I, my lord, and was accounted a good actor.

Hamlet. What did you enact?

Polonius. I did enact Julius Cæsar. I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Hamlet. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. — Be the players ready?

Rosencrantz. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me. 110

Hamlet. No, good mother, here 's metal more attractive. [*Lying down at Ophelia's feet.*

Polonius. [*To the King*] O, ho! do you mark that?

Ophelia. You are merry, my lord.

Hamlet. Who, I?

Ophelia. Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. O God, your only jig-maker! What

should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within 's two hours.

Ophelia. Nay, 't is twice two months, my lord.

Hamlet. So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I 'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there 's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by 'r lady, he must build churches, then, or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is ' For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot! '

Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters

Enter a King *and a* Queen *very lovingly; the* Queen *embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck; lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the* King's *ears, and exit. The* Queen *returns, finds the* King *dead, and makes passionate action. The* Poisoner, *with some two or three* Mutes, *comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The* Poisoner *wooes the* Queen *with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.* [*Exeunt.*

Ophelia. What means this, my lord?

Hamlet. Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.

Ophelia. Belike this show imports the argument of the play?

Enter Prologue

Hamlet. We shall know by this fellow. The players cannot keep counsel; they 'll tell all.

Ophelia. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Hamlet. Ay, or any show that you 'll show him; be not you ashamed to show, he 'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Ophelia. You are naught, you are naught; I 'll mark the play.

Prologue. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency
We beg your hearing patiently. [*Exit.*

Hamlet. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Ophelia. 'T is brief, my lord.

Hamlet. As woman's love.

Enter two Players, King *and* Queen

Player King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground,
And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been,
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

Player Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,

So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must ;
For women's fear and love holds quantity,
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know,
And as my love is siz'd, my fear is so.
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear ;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.
Player King. Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too,
My operant powers their functions leave to do ;
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd, and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou —
Player Queen. O, confound the rest !
Such love must needs be treason in my breast ;
In second husband let me be accurst !
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.
Hamlet. [*Aside*] Wormwood, wormwood !
Player Queen. The instances that second marriage move
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love ;
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.
Player King. I do believe you think what now you speak,
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity,
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree,
But fall unshaken when they mellow be.
Most necessary 't is that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt ;
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy

Their own enactures with themselves destroy.
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament ;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye, nor 't is not strange
That even our loves should with our fortunes change ;
For 't is a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favourites flies;
The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend ;
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,
And who in want a hollow friend doth try
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun,
Our wills and fates do so contrary run
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own.
So think thou wilt no second husband wed,
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.

Player Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me day and night!
To desperation turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy
Meet what I would have well and it destroy!
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Hamlet. If she should break it now!

Player King. 'T is deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here a while;
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

Player Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain! [*Exit.*

Hamlet. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady protests too much, methinks.

Hamlet. O, but she 'll keep her word!

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in 't?

Hamlet. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' the world.

King. What do you call the play? 230

Hamlet. The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murther done in Vienna. Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista. You shall see anon; 't is a knavish piece of work, but what o' that? your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not; let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung. —

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Ophelia. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Hamlet. I could interpret between you and your 240 love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Ophelia. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Hamlet. Begin, murtherer; pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come; the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

Lucianus. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,

Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the poison into the sleeper's ear.*

Hamlet. He poisons him i' the garden for 's estate. His name's Gonzago; the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian. You shall see anon how the murtherer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Ophelia. The king rises!

Hamlet. What, frighted with false fire!

Queen. How fares my lord?

Polonius. Give o'er the play!

King. Give me some light! — away!

All. Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.*

Hamlet. Why, let the strucken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play,
For some must watch, while some must sleep;
So runs the world away.

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers — if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me — with two Provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

Horatio. Half a share.

Hamlet. A whole one, I.
For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very — pajock.

Horatio. You might have rhymed.

Hamlet. O good Horatio, I 'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Horatio. Very well, my lord.

Hamlet. Upon the talk of the poisoning?

Horatio. I did very well note him.

Hamlet. Ah, ha! Come, some music! come, the recorders! —

For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike, — he likes it not, perdy. —
Come, some music!

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN

Guildenstern. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Hamlet. Sir, a whole history.

Guildenstern. The king, sir, —

Hamlet. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guildenstern. Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

Hamlet. With drink, sir?

Guildenstern. No, my lord, rather with choler.

Hamlet. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

Guildenstern. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Hamlet. I am tame, sir; pronounce.

Guildenstern. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Hamlet. You are welcome.

Guildenstern. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment; if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

Hamlet. Sir, I cannot.

Guildenstern. What, my lord?

Hamlet. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit 's diseased; but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command, — or, rather, as you say, my mother; therefore no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say, —

Rosencrantz. Then thus she says: your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Hamlet. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

Rosencrantz. She desires to speak with you in her closet ere you go to bed.

Hamlet. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Rosencrantz. My lord, you once did love me.

Hamlet. So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

Rosencrantz. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Hamlet. Sir, I lack advancement.

Rosencrantz. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Hamlet. Ay, sir, but 'while the grass grows,' — the proverb is something musty. —

Re-enter Players *with recorders*

O, the recorders! let me see one. — To withdraw with you, — why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guildenstern. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Hamlet. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guildenstern. My lord, I cannot.

Hamlet. I pray you.

Guildenstern. Believe me, I cannot.

Hamlet. I do beseech you.

Guildenstern. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Hamlet. 'T is as easy as lying; govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guildenstern. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Hamlet. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out

the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me. —

Enter POLONIUS

God bless you, sir!

Polonius. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Hamlet. Do you see yonder cloud that 's almost in shape of a camel?

Polonius. By the mass, and 't is like a camel, indeed.

Hamlet. Methinks it is like a weasel.

Polonius. It is backed like a weasel.

Hamlet. Or like a whale?

Polonius. Very like a whale.

Hamlet. Then will I come to my mother by and by. — [*Aside*] They fool me to the top of my bent. — I will come by and by.

Polonius. I will say so. [*Exit Polonius.*

Hamlet. By and by is easily said. — Leave me, friends. — [*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

'T is now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world; now could I drink hot blood,

And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.
O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom;
Let me be cruel, not unnatural.
I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites.
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [*Exit.*

Scene III. *A Room in the Castle*

Enter King, Rosencrantz, *and* Guildenstern

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you.
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.

Guildenstern. We will ourselves provide;
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies safe
That live and feed upon your majesty.

Rosencrantz. The single and peculiar life is bound
With all the strength and armour of the mind
To keep itself from noyance; but much more
That spirit upon whose weal depends and rests
The lives of many. The cease of majesty

Dies not alone, but like a gulf doth draw
What 's near it with it; it is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd, which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Rosencrantz. }
Guildenstern. } We will haste us.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Enter POLONIUS

Polonius. My lord, he 's going to his mother's closet.
Behind the arras I 'll convey myself,
To hear the process. I 'll warrant she 'll tax him home;
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'T is meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege;
I 'll call upon you ere you go to bed
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord. —

[*Exit Polonius.*

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,

A brother's murther! Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will;
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what 's in prayer but this twofold force, —
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down? Then I 'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murther?'
That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murther,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 't is seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law; but 't is not so above.
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can; what can it not?
Yet what can it when one can not repent?

O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limed soul, that struggling to be free
Art more engag'd! Help, angels! Make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
All may be well. [*Retires and kneels.*

Enter HAMLET

Hamlet. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;
And now I 'll do 't. — And so he goes to heaven;
And so am I reveng'd. That would be scann'd;
A villain kills my father, and for that
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread,
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?
But in our circumstance and course of thought,
'T is heavy with him; and am I then reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No!
Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent:
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;
At gaming, swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in 't;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,

And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays. —
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*

King. [*Rising*] My words fly up, my thoughts remain below;
Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [*Exit.*

Scene IV. *The Queen's Closet*

Enter Queen *and* Polonius

Polonius. He will come straight. Look you lay home to him;
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I 'll silence me even here.
Pray you, be round with him.

Hamlet. [*Within*] Mother! mother! mother!

Queen. I 'll warrant you;
Fear me not. Withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*Polonius hides behind the arras.*

Enter Hamlet

Hamlet. Now, mother, what 's the matter? 8

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Hamlet. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Hamlet. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet!

Hamlet. What 's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Hamlet. No, by the rood, not so;
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife,
And — would it were not so! — you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then, I 'll set those to you that can speak.

Hamlet. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge.
You go not till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murther me?
Help, help, ho!

Polonius. [*Behind*] What, ho! help, help, help!

Hamlet. [*Drawing*] How now! a rat? Dead, for a ducat, dead! [*Makes a pass through the arras.*

Polonius. [*Behind*] O, I am slain! [*Falls and dies.*

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Hamlet. Nay, I know not;
Is it the king?

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Hamlet. A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king!

Hamlet. Ay, lady, 't was my word. —
[*Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius.*
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune,
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger. —
Leave wringing of your hands; peace! sit you down,

And let me wring your heart, for so I shall
If it be made of penetrable stuff,
If damned custom have not braz'd it so
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.
Queen. What have I done, that thou darest wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?
Hamlet. Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love
And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows
As false as dicers' oaths; O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words! Heaven's face doth glow,
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.
Queen. Ay me, what act,
That roars so loud and thunders in the index?
Hamlet. Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See what a grace was seated on this brow:
Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination and a form indeed

Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man.
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband, like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love, for at your age
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment
Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,
Else could you not have motion, but sure, that sense
Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd
But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference. What devil was 't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire; proclaim no shame
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more;

Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grained spots
As will not leave their tinct.
Hamlet. Nay, but to live
Stew'd in corruption, —
Queen. O, speak to me no more;
These words like daggers enter in mine ears.
No more, sweet Hamlet!
Hamlet. A murtherer and a villain;
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!
Queen. No more!
Hamlet. A king of shreds and patches, —

Enter GHOST

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! — What would your gracious figure?
Queen. Alas! he 's mad!
Hamlet. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O, say!
Ghost. Do not forget. This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look, amazement on thy mother sits.

O, step between her and her fighting soul;
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Hamlet. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is 't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,
Starts up and stands an end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Hamlet. On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable. — Do not look upon me,
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects; then what I have to do
Will want true colour, tears perchance for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Hamlet. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all, yet all that is I see.

Hamlet. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Hamlet. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he liv'd!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[*Exit Ghost.*

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain;
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.
Hamlet. Ecstasy!
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness
That I have utter'd; bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word, which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass but my madness speaks;
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what 's past, avoid what is to come,
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue;
For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.
Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.
Hamlet. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night; but go not to mine uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery

That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence; the next more easy,
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either master the devil or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night;
And when you are desirous to be blest,
I 'll blessing beg of you. — For this same lord,
[*Pointing to Polonius.*
I do repent; but heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. — So, again, good night.
I must be cruel, only to be kind;
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady.

Queen. What shall I do?

Hamlet. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed,
Pinch wanton on your cheek, call you his mouse;
And let him for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or, paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'T were good you let him know,
For who, that 's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?

No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Hamlet. I must to England; you know that?

Queen. Alack,
I had forgot; 't is so concluded on.

Hamlet. There 's letters seal'd, and my two school-fellows —
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd —
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work,
For 't is the sport to have the enginer
Hoist with his own petar; and 't shall go hard
But I will delve one yard below their mines
And blow them at the moon. O, 't is most sweet
When in one line two crafts directly meet!
This man shall set me packing;
I 'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.
Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave. —
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you. —
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally; Hamlet dragging in Polonius.*

DANISH SHIPS

ACT IV

SCENE I. *A Room in the Castle*

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN

King. There 's matter in these sighs; these profound heaves
You must translate, 't is fit we understand them.
Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while. —
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier; in his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,

Whips out his rapier, cries, 'A rat, a rat!'
And in this brainish apprehension kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there;
His liberty is full of threats to all,
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt,
This mad young man; but so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit,
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd,
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure. He weeps for what is done.

King. O Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch
But we will ship him hence; and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. — Ho, Guildenstern!

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN

Friends both, go join you with some further aid;
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him.

Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this. —
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
Come, Gertrude, we 'll call up our wisest friends,
And let them know both what we mean to do
And what 's untimely done; so, haply, slander — 40
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poison'd shot — may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air. O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *Another Room in the Castle*

Enter Hamlet

Hamlet. Safely stowed.

Rosencrantz. } [*Within*] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!
Guildenstern. }

Hamlet. What noise? who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern

Rosencrantz. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Hamlet. Compounded it with dust, whereto 't is kin.

Rosencrantz. Tell us where 't is, that we may take it thence
And bear it to the chapel.

Hamlet. Do not believe it.

Rosencrantz. Believe what?

Hamlet. That I can keep your counsel and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge, what replication should be made by the son of a king?

Rosencrantz. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Hamlet. Ay, sir, that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end; he keeps them, as an ape doth nuts, in the corner of his jaw, first mouthed, to be last swallowed. When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Rosencrantz. I understand you not, my lord.

Hamlet. I am glad of it; a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Rosencrantz. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

Hamlet. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing —

Guildenstern. A thing, my lord!

Hamlet. Of nothing; bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *Another Room in the Castle*

Enter King, *attended*

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body. How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!

Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
He 's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And where 't is so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause; diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,
Or not at all. —

Enter ROSENCRANTZ

How now! what hath befallen?

Rosencrantz. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Rosencrantz. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Rosencrantz. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET *and* GUILDENSTERN

King. Now, Hamlet, where 's Polonius?

Hamlet. At supper.

King. At supper! where?

Hamlet. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten; a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet; we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king and your lean beggar is but

variable service, two dishes, but to one table; that 's the end.

King. Alas, alas!

Hamlet. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Hamlet. Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Hamlet. In heaven; send thither to see. If your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there. [*To some Attendants.*

Hamlet. He will stay till ye come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done, — must send thee hence
With fiery quickness; therefore prepare thyself.
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.

Hamlet. For England!

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Hamlet. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Hamlet. I see a cherub that sees them. — But, come; for England! — Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Hamlet. My mother: father and mother is man and wife, man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. — Come, for England! [*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot, tempt him with speed aboard;
Delay it not; I 'll have him hence to-night.
Away! for every thing is seal'd and done
That else leans on the affair; pray you, make haste. —
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught —
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us — thou may'st not coldly set
Our sovereign process, which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England,
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me; till I know 't is done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. [*Exit.*

Scene IV. *A Plain in Denmark*

Enter Fortinbras, *a* Captain, *and* Soldiers, *marching.*

Fortinbras. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;

Tell him that by his license Fortinbras
Claims the conveyance of a promis'd march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye;
And let him know so.

Captain. I will do 't, my lord.

Fortinbras. Go softly on.

[*Exeunt Fortinbras and Soldiers.*

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and others*

Hamlet. Good sir, whose powers are these?

Captain. They are of Norway, sir.

Hamlet. How purpos'd, sir, I pray you?

Captain. Against some part of Poland.

Hamlet. Who commands them, sir?

Captain. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Hamlet. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?

Captain. Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Hamlet. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Captain. Yes, 't is already garrison'd.

Hamlet. Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats
Will not debate the question of this straw;
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks and shows no cause without
Why the man dies. — I humbly thank you, sir.
Captain. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit.*
Rosencrantz. Will 't please you go, my lord?
Hamlet. I 'll be with you straight. Go a little before. — [*Exeunt all except Hamlet.*
How all occasions do inform against me
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, He that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To fust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event, —
A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom
And ever three parts coward, — I do not know
Why yet I live to say 'This thing 's to do,'
Sith I have cause and will and strength and means
To do 't. Examples gross as earth exhort me;
Witness this army of such mass and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd

Makes mouths at the invisible event,
Exposing what is mortal and unsure
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour 's at the stake. How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep, while to my shame I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That for a fantasy and trick of fame
Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough and continent
To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! [*Exit.*

SCENE V. *Elsinore. A Room in the Castle*

Enter QUEEN, HORATIO, *and a* Gentleman

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Gentleman. She is importunate, indeed distract;
Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

Gentleman. She speaks much of her father, says she hears
There 's tricks i' the world, and hems and beats her heart;

Spurns enviously at straws, speaks things in doubt
That carry but half sense. Her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection; they aim at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts,
Which, as her winks and nods and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Horatio. 'T were good she were spoken with, for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

Queen. Let her come in.— [*Exit Horatio.*

[*Aside*] To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss;
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter HORATIO *with* OPHELIA

Ophelia. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

Queen. How now, Ophelia!

Ophelia. [Sings]

How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

Ophelia. Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

[Sings] *He is dead and gone, lady,*
He is dead and gone;

At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia, —

Ophelia. Pray you, mark.

[Sings] *White his shroud as the mountain snow, —*

[*Enter King.*

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Ophelia. [Sings]

Larded with sweet flowers,
Which bewept to the grave did go
With true-love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady? 40

Ophelia. Well, God 'ield you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. [*Aside*] Conceit upon her father.

Ophelia. Pray you, let 's have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this:

[Sings] *To-morrow is St. Valentine's day,*
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine. 50

King. How long hath she been thus?

Ophelia. I hope all will be well. We must be patient; but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it; and so I thank you for your good counsel. — Come, my coach! — Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [*Exit.*

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. — [*Exit Horatio.*

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions. First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove; the people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers
For good Polonius' death, — and we have done but greenly,
In hugger-mugger to inter him; poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgment,
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts;
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France,
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death,
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murthering-piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death. [*A noise within.*

Queen. Alack, what noise is this?

King. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door. —

Enter another Gentleman

What is the matter?

Gentleman. Save yourself, my lord;
The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry 'Choose we; Laertes shall be king!'
Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds,
'Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!'

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!

King. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*

Enter LAERTES, *armed;* Danes *following*

Laertes. Where is this king? — Sirs, stand you all without.

Danes. No, let 's come in.

Laertes. I pray you, give me leave.

Danes. We will, we will. [*They retire without the door.*

Laertes. I thank you; keep the door. — O thou vile king,
Give me my father!

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laertes. That drop of blood that 's calm proclaims me bastard,
Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brows
Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like? —
Let him go, Gertrude, do not fear our person;
There 's such divinity doth hedge a king
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will. — Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incens'd. — Let him go, Gertrude. —
Speak, man.

Laertes. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laertes. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with.
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand:
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes; only I 'll be reveng'd
Most throughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laertes. My will, not all the world;
And for my means, I 'll husband them so well
They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is 't writ in your revenge
That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?

Laertes. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

Laertes. To his good friends thus wide I 'll ope my arms,
And, like the kind life-rendering pelican,
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [*Within*] Let her come in.

Laertes. How now! what noise is that?—

Re-enter OPHELIA

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—
O heavens! is 't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love, and where 't is fine

It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Ophelia. [Sings]

They bore him barefac'd on the bier;
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny;
And on his grave rains many a tear. —

Fare you well, my dove!

Laertes. Hadst thou thy wits and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

Ophelia. You must sing, *Down a-down, and you call him a-down-a.* O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward that stole his master's daughter.

Laertes. This nothing 's more than matter.

Ophelia. There 's rosemary, that 's for remembrance, — pray you, love, remember; and there is pansies, that 's for thoughts.

Laertes. A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Ophelia. There 's fennel for you, and columbines; there 's rue for you; and here 's some for me; we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays; O, you must wear your rue with a difference. There 's a daisy; I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died; they say he made a good end, —

[Sings] *For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.*

Laertes. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

Ophelia. [Sings]

And will he not come again?
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead;
Go to thy death-bed,
He never will come again.

His beard was white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll;
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan;
God ha' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. — God be wi' ye! [*Exit.*

Laertes. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

Laertes. Let this be so;
His means of death, his obscure burial —
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,

No noble rite nor formal ostentation —
Cry to be heard, as 't were from heaven to earth,
That I must call 't in question.

King. So you shall;
And where the offence is let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI. *Another Room in the Castle*

Enter Horatio *and a* Servant

Horatio. What are they that would speak with me?

Servant. Sailors, sir; they say they have letters for you.

Horatio. Let them come in. — [*Exit Servant.*
I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors

1 *Sailor.* God bless you, sir!

Horatio. Let him bless thee too.

1 *Sailor.* He shall, sir, an 't please him. There 's a letter for you, sir — it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England — if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Horatio. [Reads] '*Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king; they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a*

compelled valour; in the grapple I boarded them; on the instant they got clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy, but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent, and repair thou to me with as much speed as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England; of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell. He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET.'

Come, I will make you way for these your letters,
And do 't the speedier that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *Another Room in the Castle*

Enter KING *and* LAERTES

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursued my life.

Laertes. It well appears; but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O, for two special reasons,
Which may to you perhaps seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself—
My virtue or my plague, be it either which—
She 's so conjunctive to my life and soul
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive
Why to a public count I might not go
Is the great love the general gender bear him,
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laertes. And so have I a noble father lost,
A sister driven into desperate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections; but my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that; you must not think
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
That we can let our beard be shook with danger
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more;
I lov'd your father, and we love ourself,
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine—

Enter a Messenger

How now! what news?

Messenger. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet;
This to your majesty, this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Messenger. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not.
They were given me by Claudio; he receiv'd them
Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them. —
Leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*

[Reads] '*High and mighty, You shall know I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes; when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return.* HAMLET.'
What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laertes. Know you the hand?

King. 'T is Hamlet's character. 'Naked!'
And in a postscript here, he says 'alone.'
Can you advise me?

Laertes. I 'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come;
It warms the very sickness in my heart
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
'Thus didest thou.'

King. If it be so, Laertes —
As how should it be so? how otherwise? —
Will you be rul'd by me?

Laertes. Ay, my lord,
So you will not o'errule me to a peace.
King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,
As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall;
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice
And call it accident.
Laertes. My lord, I will be rul'd;
The rather if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.
King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein they say you shine; your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him
As did that one, and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.
Laertes. What part is that, my lord?
King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness. Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy. —
I 've seen myself, and serv'd against, the French,
And they can well on horseback, but this gallant

Had witchcraft in 't; he grew into his seat,
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse
As he had been incorps'd and demi-natur'd
With the brave beast. So far he topp'd my thought
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,
Come short of what he did.
Laertes. A Norman was 't?
King. A Norman.
Laertes. Upon my life, Lamond.
King The very same.
Laertes. I know him well; he is the brooch indeed
And gem of all the nation.
King. He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out 't would be a sight indeed
If one could match you; the scrimers of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this —
Laertes. What out of this, my lord?
King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?
Laertes. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think you did not love your father;
But that I know love is begun by time,
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;
And nothing is at a like goodness still,
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
Dies in his own too-much. That we would do,
We should do when we would; for this 'would' changes
And hath abatements and delays as many
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But to the quick o' the ulcer:
Hamlet comes back; what would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?

Laertes. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murther sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home.
We 'll put on those shall praise your excellence
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine, together
And wager on your heads. He, being remiss,
Most generous and free from all contriving,

Will not peruse the foils ; so that, with ease
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice
Requite him for your father.
Laertes. I will do 't ;
And for that purpose I 'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death
That is but scratch'd withal ; I 'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.
King. Let 's further think of this,
Weigh what convenience both of time and means
May fit us to our shape. If this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'T were better not assay'd ; therefore this project
Should have a back or second, that might hold
If this should blast in proof. Soft ! — let me see —
We 'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings, —
I ha 't :
When in your motion you are hot and dry —
As make your bouts more violent to that end —
And that he calls for drink, I 'll have prepar'd him
A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there. —

Enter QUEEN

How now, sweet queen!

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow. — Your sister 's drown'd, Laertes.

Laertes. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them.
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And, mermaid-like, a while they bore her up,
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element; but long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laertes. Alas, then, is she drown'd?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laertes. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears. But yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,

Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out. — Adieu, my lord;
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze
But that this folly douts it. [*Exit.*

King. Let 's follow, Gertrude.
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I this will give it start again;
Therefore let 's follow. [*Exeunt.*

CHURCH AT ELSINORE

ACT V

SCENE I. *A Churchyard*

Enter two Clowns, *with spades, etc.*

1 *Clown.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 *Clown.* I tell thee she is, and therefore make her grave straight; the crowner hath sat on her and finds it Christian burial.

1 *Clown.* How can that be unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2 *Clown.* Why, 't is found so.

1 *Clown.* It must be *se offendendo;* it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act, and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform; argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2 *Clown.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver, —

1 *Clown.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good. If the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he nill he, he goes, — mark you that, — but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself; argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

2 *Clown.* But is this law?

1 *Clown.* Ay, marry, is 't; crowner's quest law.

2 *Clown.* Will you ha' the truth on 't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

1 *Clown.* Why, there thou say'st; and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even-Christian. — Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Clown.* Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clown.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 *Clown.* Why, he had none.

1 *Clown.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says

'Adam digged;' could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee; if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself —

2 *Clown.* Go to.

1 *Clown.* What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clown.* The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clown.* I like thy wit well, in good faith. The gallows does well, but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill. Now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To 't again, come.

2 *Clown.* Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clown.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2 *Clown.* Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clown.* To 't.

2 *Clown.* Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO, *at a distance*

1 *Clown.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating, and when you are asked this question next, say 'a grave-maker;' the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor. [*Exit* 2 *Clown.*

[*He digs, and sings.*

In youth, when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet,
To contract — O! — *the time, for* — ah! — *my behove,*
O, methought, there was nothing meet.

Hamlet. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Horatio. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Hamlet. 'T is e'en so; the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1 *Clown.* [Sings]

But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intil the land,
As if I had never been such.

[*Throws up a skull.*

Hamlet. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once; how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murther! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Horatio. It might, my lord.

Hamlet. Or of a courtier, which could say 'Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord!' This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it, might it not?

Horatio. Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, e'en so; and now my Lady Worm's, chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade. Here 's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see 't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding but to play at loggats with 'em? mine ache to think on 't.

1 *Clown.* [Sings]

A pick-axe and a spade, a spade,
For and a shrouding sheet;
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

[*Throws up another skull.*

Hamlet. There 's another; why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in 's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries; is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha!

Horatio. Not a jot more, my lord.

Hamlet. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Horatio. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Hamlet. They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. — Whose grave 's this, sirrah?

1 *Clown.* Mine, sir. —

[Sings] *O, a pit of clay for to be made*
For such a guest is meet.

Hamlet. I think it be thine, indeed, for thou liest in 't.

1 *Clown.* You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore it is not yours; for my part, I do not lie in 't, and yet it is mine.

Hamlet. Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't and say it is thine; 't is for the dead, not for the quick, therefore thou liest.

1 *Clown.* 'T is a quick lie, sir; 't will away again, from me to you.

Hamlet. What man dost thou dig it for?

1 *Clown.* For no man, sir.

Hamlet. What woman, then?

1 *Clown.* For none, neither.

Hamlet. Who is to be buried in 't?

1 *Clown.* One that was a woman, sir, but, rest her soul, she 's dead.

Hamlet. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier

he galls his kibe. — How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1 *Clown.* Of all the days i' the year, I came to 't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Hamlet. How long is that since?

1 *Clown.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that; it was the very day that young Hamlet was born, he that is mad and sent into England.

Hamlet. Ay, marry, why was he sent to England?

1 *Clown.* Why, because he was mad; he shall recover his wits there, or, if he do not, it 's no great matter there.

Hamlet. Why?

1 *Clown.* 'T will not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Hamlet. How came he mad?

1 *Clown.* Very strangely, they say.

Hamlet. How strangely?

1 *Clown.* Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Hamlet. Upon what ground?

1 *Clown.* Why, here in Denmark; I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Hamlet. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

1 *Clown.* I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die — as we have many pocky corses now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in — he will last you some eight year or nine year; a tanner will last you nine year.

Hamlet. Why he more than another?

1 *Clown.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here 's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

Hamlet. Whose was it?

1 *Clown.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was; whose do you think it was?

Hamlet. Nay, I know not.

1 *Clown.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Hamlet. This?

1 *Clown.* E'en that.

Hamlet. Let me see. — [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick! — I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. He hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. — Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chop-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that. — Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Horatio. What 's that, my lord?

Hamlet. Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

Horatio. E'en so.

Hamlet. And smelt so? pah! [*Puts down the skull.*

Horatio. E'en so, my lord.

Hamlet. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Horatio. 'T were to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Hamlet. No, faith, not a jot, but to follow him thither with modesty enough and likelihood to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away;
O, that that earth which kept the world in awe
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!—

But soft! but soft! aside! here comes the king,

Enter Priests, *etc.*, *in procession; the Corpse of* Ophelia, Laertes *and* Mourners *following;* King, Queen, *their trains, etc.*

The queen, the courtiers; who is that they follow?
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken

The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo it own life; 't was of some estate.
Couch we awhile, and mark. [*Retiring with Horatio.*
Laertes. What ceremony else?
Hamlet. That is Laertes, a very noble youth; mark.
Laertes. What ceremony else?
1 *Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warrantise. Her death was doubtful,
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her.
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.
Laertes. Must there no more be done?
1 *Priest.* No more be done;
We should profane the service of the dead
To sing a requiem and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.
Laertes. Lay her i' the earth;—
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring!—I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be
When thou liest howling.
Hamlet. What, the fair Ophelia!
Queen. Sweets to the sweet; farewell!
[*Scattering flowers.*
I hop'd thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;

I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not t' have strew'd thy grave.
Laertes. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee of! — Hold off the earth awhile
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.
[*Leaps into the grave.*
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made
To o'ertop old Pelion or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.
Hamlet. [*Advancing*] What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,
Hamlet the Dane! [*Leaps into the grave.*
Laertes. The devil take thy soul!
[*Grappling with him.*
Hamlet. Thou pray'st not well.
I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenitive and rash,
Yet have I something in me dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear. Hold off thy hand!
King. Pluck them asunder.
Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!
All. Gentlemen, —
Horatio. Good my lord, be quiet.
[*The Attendants part them and they come out of the grave.*

Hamlet. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.
Queen. O my son, what theme?
Hamlet. I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?
King. O, he is mad, Laertes.
Queen. For love of God, forbear him.
Hamlet. 'Swounds, show me what thou 'lt do.
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?
Woo't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?
I 'll do 't. Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I;
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou 'lt mouth,
I 'll rant as well as thou.
Queen. This is mere madness,
And thus awhile the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,
His silence will sit drooping.
Hamlet. Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever. — But it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him. —
[*Exit Horatio.*
[*To Laertes*] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
We 'll put the matter to the present push. —
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
This grave shall have a living monument.
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *A Hall in the Castle*

Enter Hamlet *and* Horatio

Hamlet. So much for this, sir, now let me see the other;
You do remember all the circumstance?
Horatio. Remember it, my lord!
Hamlet. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting
That would not let me sleep; methought I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly, —
And prais'd be rashness for it, let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do fail; and that should teach us
There 's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will, —
Horatio. That is most certain.
Hamlet. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark

Grop'd I to find out them, had my desire,
Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew
To mine own room again; making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission, where I found, Horatio, —
O royal knavery! — an exact command,
Larded with many several sorts of reasons
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

Horatio. Is 't possible?

Hamlet. Here 's the commission; read it at more leisure.

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

Horatio. I beseech you.

Hamlet. Being thus be-netted round with villanies —
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains
They had begun the play — I sat me down,
Devis'd a new commission, wrote it fair;
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning, but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?

Horatio. Ay, good my lord.

Hamlet. An earnest conjuration from the king
As England was his faithful tributary,

As love between them like the palm might flourish,
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear
And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
And many such-like as's of great charge,
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.

Horatio. How was this seal'd?

Hamlet. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal,
Folded the writ up in form of the other,
Subscrib'd it, gave 't the impression, plac'd it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight, and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Horatio. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to 't.

Hamlet. Why, man, they did make love to this employment,
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow.
'T is dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Horatio. Why, what a king is this!

Hamlet. Does it not, thinks 't thee, stand me now upon —
He that hath kill'd my king and whor'd my mother,

Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage — is 't not perfect conscience
To quit him with this arm? and is 't not to be damn'd,
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

Horatio. It must be shortly known to him from England
What is the issue of the business there.

Hamlet. It will be short; the interim is mine,
And a man's life 's no more than to say 'One.'
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For by the image of my cause I see
The portraiture of his. I 'll court his favours;
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Horatio. Peace! who comes here?

Enter Osric

Osric. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Hamlet. I humbly thank you, sir. — [*Aside to Horatio*] Dost know this water-fly?

Horatio. [*Aside to Hamlet*] No, my good lord.

Hamlet. [*Aside to Horatio*] Thy state is the more gracious; for 't is a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile; let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess. 'T is a

chough, but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osric. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Hamlet. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Put your bonnet to his right use; 't is for the head.

Osric. I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

Hamlet. No, believe me, 't is very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osric. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Hamlet. But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

Osric. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry, — as 't were, — I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter, —

Hamlet. I beseech you, remember —

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.*

Osric. Nay, in good faith; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing. Indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Hamlet. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially

would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article, and his infusion of such dearth and rareness as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror, and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osric. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Hamlet. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osric. Sir?

Horatio. Is 't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do 't, sir, really.

Hamlet. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osric. Of Laertes?

Horatio. [*Aside to Hamlet*] His purse is empty already; all 's golden words are spent.

Hamlet. Of him, sir.

Osric. I know you are not ignorant —

Hamlet. I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir?

Osric. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is —

Hamlet. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but to know a man well were to know himself.

Osric. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the im-

putation laid on him by them, in his meed he 's unfellowed.

Hamlet. What 's his weapon?

Osric. Rapier and dagger.

Hamlet. That 's two of his weapons; but, well.

Osric. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses; against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so. Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Hamlet. What call you the carriages?

Horatio. [*Aside to Hamlet*] I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

Osric. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Hamlet. The phrase would be more germane to the matter if we could carry cannon by our sides; I would it might be hangers till then. But on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that 's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this 'imponed,' as you call it?

Osric. The king, sir, hath laid that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid on twelve for nine, and it would come to immediate trial if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Hamlet. How if I answer no?

Osric. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Hamlet. Sir, I will walk here in the hall. If it please his majesty, 't is the breathing time of day with me. Let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

Osric. Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

Hamlet. To this effect, sir, after what flourish your nature will.

Osric. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Hamlet. Yours, yours. — [*Exit Osric.*] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for 's turn.

Horatio. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Hamlet. He did comply with his dug before he sucked it. Thus has he — and many more of the same bevy that I know the drossy age dotes on — only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

Enter a Lord

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him that you

attend him in the hall; he sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Hamlet. I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure. If his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king and queen and all are coming down.

Hamlet. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play.

Hamlet. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*

Horatio. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Hamlet. I do not think so. Since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all 's here about my heart; but it is no matter.

Horatio. Nay, good my lord, —

Hamlet. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Horatio. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it. I will forestall their repair hither and say you are not fit.

Hamlet. Not a whit, we defy augury; there 's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 't is not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come; the readiness is all. Since no man knows aught of what he leaves, what is 't to leave betimes? Let be.

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, *and* Attendants *with foils, etc.*

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The King puts Laertes's hand into Hamlet's.*

Hamlet. Give me your pardon, sir; I 've done you wrong,
But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.
This presence knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd
With sore distraction. What I have done
That might your nature, honour, and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was 't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And when he 's not himself does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not; Hamlet denies it.
Who does it, then? His madness; if 't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd,
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Sir, in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house
And hurt my brother.

Laertes. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge; but in my terms of honour

I stand aloof, and will no reconcilement
Till by some elder masters of known honour
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungor'd. But till that time
I do receive your offer'd love like love
And will not wrong it.

Hamlet. I embrace it freely
And will this brother's wager frankly play. —
Give us the foils. — Come on.

Laertes. Come, one for me.

Hamlet. I 'll be your foil, Laertes ; in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laertes. You mock me, sir.

Hamlet. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric. — Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

Hamlet. Very well, my lord ;
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it, I have seen you both ;
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laertes. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Hamlet. This likes me well. — These foils have all a length?

Osric. Ay, my good lord. [*They prepare to play.*

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table. —
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,

Let all the battlements their ordnance fire.
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
'Now the king drinks to Hamlet!' — Come, begin; —
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Hamlet. Come on, sir.

Laertes. Come, my lord. [*They play.*

Hamlet. One.

Laertes. No.

Hamlet. Judgment.

Osric. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laertes. Well; again.

King. Stay; give me drink. — Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here 's to thy health. —
[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*
Give him the cup.

Hamlet. I 'll play this bout first; set it by awhile. —
Come. [*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?

Laertes. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He 's fat and scant of breath. —
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows;
The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Hamlet. Good madam, —

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.

King. [*Aside*] It is the poison'd cup; it is too late.

Hamlet. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laertes. My lord, I 'll hit him now.

King. I do not think 't.

Laertes. [*Aside*] And yet 't is almost 'gainst my conscience.

Hamlet. Come, for the third, Laertes. You but dally; I pray you, pass with your best violence. I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

Laertes. Say you so? come on. [*They play.*

Osric. Nothing, neither way.

Laertes. Have at you now!

[*Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.*

King. Part them; they are incens'd.

Hamlet. Nay, come again. [*The Queen falls.*

Osric. Look to the queen there, ho!

Horatio. They bleed on both sides. — How is it, my lord?

Osric. How is 't, Laertes?

Laertes. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric; I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Hamlet. How does the queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink, — O my dear Hamlet, —
The drink, the drink! — I am poison'd. [*Dies.*
Hamlet. O villany! — Ho! — let the door be lock'd!
Treachery! Seek it out!
Laertes. It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good,
In thee there is not half an hour of life.
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenom'd. The foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again. Thy mother 's poison'd;
I can no more, — the king — the king 's to blame.
Hamlet. The point envenom'd too! —
Then, venom, to thy work! [*Stabs the King.*
All. Treason! treason!
King. O, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.
Hamlet. Here, thou incestuous, murtherous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion! Is thy union here?
Follow my mother! [*King dies.*
Laertes. He is justly serv'd;
It is a poison temper'd by himself. —
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet;
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*
Hamlet. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee. —

I am dead, Horatio. — Wretched queen, adieu!
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time — as this fell sergeant, Death,
Is strict in his arrest — O, I could tell you —
But let it be. — Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Horatio. Never believe it,
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane;
Here 's yet some liquor left.

Hamlet. As thou 'rt a man,
Give me the cup, let go; by heaven, I 'll have 't. —
O God! — Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story. — [*March afar off, and shot within.*
What warlike noise is this?

Osric. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

Hamlet. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit.
I cannot live to hear the news from England,
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras. He has my dying voice;

So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited — the rest is silence. [*Dies.*
Horatio. Now cracks a noble heart. — Good night, sweet prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest! —
Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*

Enter FORTINBRAS, *the* English Ambassadors, *and others*

Fortinbras. Where is this sight?
Horatio. What is it ye would see?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.
Fortinbras. This quarry cries on havoc. — O proud Death,
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck?
1 *Ambassador.* The sight is dismal,
And our affairs from England come too late;
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,
To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.
Where should we have our thanks?
Horatio. Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you;
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;

And let me speak to the yet unknowing world
How these things came about: so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning and forc'd cause,
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fallen on the inventors' heads. All this can I
Truly deliver.

Fortinbras. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune;
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Horatio. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more;
But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild, lest more mischance,
On plots and errors, happen.

Fortinbras. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage,
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally; and, for his passage,
The soldier's music and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him. —
Take up the bodies. — Such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss. —
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

[*A dead march. Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies, after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.*

NOTES

HAMLET'S GRAVE

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

THE METRE OF THE PLAY. — It should be understood at the outset that *metre*, or the mechanism of verse, is something altogether distinct from the *music* of verse. The one is matter of rule, the other of taste and feeling. Music is not an absolute necessity of verse; the metrical form is a necessity, being that which constitutes the verse.

The plays of Shakespeare (with the exception of rhymed passages, and of occasional songs and interludes) are all in unrhymed or *blank* verse; and the normal form of this blank verse is illustrated by the eighth line in the first scene of the present play: "For this relief much thanks; 'tis bitter cold."

This line, it will be seen, consists of ten syllables, with the even syllables (2d, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th) accented, the odd syllables (1st, 3d, etc.) being unaccented. Theoretically, it is made up of five *feet* of two syllables each, with the accent on the second syllable. Such a foot is called an *iambus* (plural, *iambuses*, or the Latin *iambi*), and the form of verse is called *iambic*.

This fundamental law of Shakespeare's verse is subject to certain modifications, the most important of which are as follows: —

1. After the tenth syllable an unaccented syllable (or even two such syllables) may be added, forming what is sometimes called a *female* line, as in the seventh line of the first scene: "'T is now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco." The rhythm is complete with the second syllable of *Francisco*, the last one being an extra eleventh syllable. In lines 42 and 43, we have two extra syllables, the rhythm being complete with the second syllable of *Horatio*.

2. The accent in any part of the verse may be shifted from an even to an odd syllable; as in lines 25, 26: —

> "Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us;
> Therefore I have entreated him along."

In both lines the accent is shifted from the second to the first syllable. This change occurs very rarely in the tenth syllable, and seldom in the fourth; and it is not allowable in two successive accented syllables.

3. An extra unaccented syllable may occur in any part of the line; as in lines 17, 37, and 53. In 17 *you* is superfluous; in 37 the word *to;* and in 53 the *-tio* of *Horatio*, here virtually of one

syllable. Line 37 has also the unaccented final syllable in *heaven*, making it a female line.

4. Any unaccented syllable, occurring in an even place immediately before or after an even syllable which is properly accented, is reckoned as accented for the purposes of the verse; as, for instance, in lines 28 and 32. In 28 the first syllable of *apparition* is metrically equivalent to an accented syllable; and so with the last syllable of *fortified* in 32. Other examples are the last syllable of *majesty* in line 48, of *fantasy* in 54, of *sensible* in 57, and of *combated* in 61. In i. 3. 32 ("To his unmaster'd importunity") *importunity* has three of the five accents in the verse; and the same is true of *capability* in iv. 4. 38.

5. In many instances in Shakespeare words must be *lengthened* in order to fill out the rhythm: —

(*a*) In a large class of words in which *e* or *i* is followed by another vowel, the *e* or *i* is made a separate syllable; as *ocean*, *opinion*, *soldier*, *patience*, *partial*, *marriage*, etc. For instance, line 156 of the first scene of the present play ("This present object made probation") appears to have only nine syllables, but *probation* (see note on the word) is a quadrisyllable. In i. 5. 141 ("As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,") *soldiers* is a trisyllable; but elsewhere (as in iii. 1. 155, for instance), it is a dissyllable. In iii. 1. 172 ("I have in quick determination") *determination* has six syllables and three metrical accents. This lengthening occurs most frequently at the end of the line.

(*b*) Many monosyllables ending in *r*, *re*, *rs*, *res*, preceded by a long vowel or diphthong, are often made dissyllables; as *fare*, *fear*, *dear*, *fire*, *hair*, *hour*, *your*, etc. In i. 3. 120, "You must not take for fire. From this time," *fire* is a dissyllable. If the word is repeated in a verse it is often both monosyllable and dissyllable; as in *M. of V.* iii. 2. 20: "And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so," where either *yours* (preferably the first) is a dissyllable, the other being a monosyllable. In *J. C.* iii. 1. 172: "As fire drives out fire, so pity, pity," the first *fire* is a dissyllable.

(*c*) Words containing *l* or *r*, preceded by another consonant, are often pronounced as if a vowel came between the consonants; as in *T. of S.* ii. 1. 158: "While she did call me rascal fiddler" [fidd(e)ler]; *All 's Well*, iii. 5. 43: "If you will tarry, holy pilgrim" [pilg(e)rim]; *C. of E.* v. 1. 360: "These are the parents of these children" (childeren, the original form of the word); *W. T.* iv. 4. 76: "Grace and remembrance [rememb(e)rance] be to you both!" etc.

(*d*) Monosyllabic exclamations (*ay, O, yea, nay, hail*, etc.) and monosyllables otherwise emphasized are similarly lengthened (as *ay* in ii. 2. 39: "Pleasant and helpful to him. Ay, amen!"); also certain longer words; as *commandement* in *M. of V.* (iv. 1. 451); *safety* (trisyllable) in this play, i. 3. 21; *business* (trisyllable, as originally pronounced) in *J. C.* iv. 1. 22: "To groan and sweat under the business" (so in several other passages); and other words mentioned in the notes to the plays in which they occur.

6. Words are also *contracted* for metrical reasons, like plurals and possessives ending in a sibilant, as *balance, horse* (for *horses* and *horse's*), *princess, sense, marriage* (plural and possessive), *image*, etc. So *spirit* (see note on i. 1. 161), *inter'gatories* (*M. of V.* v. 1. 272), *unpleasant'st* (*Id.* iii. 2. 246), and other words mentioned in the notes on this and other plays.

7. The *accent* of words is also varied in many instances for metrical reasons. Thus we find both *révenue* and *revénue* in the first scene of the *M. N. D.* (lines 6 and 158), *sécure* (see note on i. 5. 61) and *secúre*, *cómplete* (see on i. 4. 52) and *compléte*, *distinct* and *distinct*, etc.

These instances of variable accent must not be confounded with those in which words were uniformly accented differently in the time of Shakespeare; like *aspéct* (see on ii. 2. 570), *impórtune*, *perséver* (never *persevére*), *perséverance*, *rheúmatic*, etc.

8. *Alexandrines*, or verses of twelve syllables, with six accents, occur here and there; as in the inscriptions on the caskets in *M. of V.* and some instances in this play. They must not be confounded

with female lines with two extra syllables (see on 1 above) or with other lines in which two extra unaccented syllables may occur.

9. *Incomplete* verses, of one or more syllables, are scattered through the plays; as in lines 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, and 11 of the first scene of this play.

10. *Doggerel* measure is used in the very earliest comedies (*L. L. L.* and *C. of E.* in particular) in the mouths of comic characters, but nowhere else in those plays, and never anywhere after 1597 or 1598.

11. *Rhyme* occurs frequently in the early plays, but diminishes with comparative regularity from that period until the latest. Thus, in *L. L. L.* there are about 1100 rhyming verses (about one-third of the whole number), in the *M. N. D.* about 900, in *Richard II.* and *R. and J.* about 500 each, while in *Cor.* and *A. and C.* there are only about 40 each, in the *Temp.* only two, and in the *W. T.* none at all, except in the chorus introducing act iv. Songs, interludes, and other matter not in ten-syllable measure are not included in this enumeration. In *Hamlet*, out of some 2500 ten-syllable verses, only 64 (aside from 81 in the play within the play) are in rhyme.

Alternate rhymes are found only in the plays written before 1599 or 1600. In the *M. of V.* there are only four lines at the end of iii. 2. In *Much Ado* and *A. Y. L.* we also find a few lines, but none at all in subsequent plays.

Rhymed couplets, or "rhyme-tags" are often found at the end of scenes; as in the second scene and thirteen other scenes of the present play. In *M. of V.*, 13 out of 20 scenes, and in *Macbeth*, 21 out of 28, have such "tags"; but in the latest plays they are not so frequent. The *Tempest*, for instance, has but one, and the *Winter's Tale* none.

12. In this edition of Shakespeare, the final *-ed* of past tenses and participles is printed *-'d* when the word is to be pronounced in the ordinary way; as in *reliev'd*, line 17, and *appear'd*, line 21, of the first scene. But when the metre requires that the *-ed* be made

a separate syllable, the *e* is retained; as in *gaged*, line 91, of the first scene, where the word is a dissyllable. The only variation from this rule is in verbs like *cry*, *die*, etc., the *-ed* of which is very rarely, if ever, made a separate syllable.

Shakespeare's Use of Verse and Prose in the Plays. — This is a subject to which the critics have given very little attention, but it is an interesting study. In the present play we find scenes entirely in verse (none entirely in prose) and others in which the two are mixed. In general, we may say that verse is used for what is distinctly poetical, and prose for what is not poetical. The distinction, however, is not so clearly marked in the earlier as in the later plays. The second scene of the *M. of V.*, for instance, is in prose, because Portia and Nerissa are talking about the suitors in a familiar and playful way; but in the *T. G. of V.*, where Julia and Lucetta are discussing the suitors of the former in much the same fashion, the scene is in verse. Dowden, commenting on *Richard II.*, remarks: "Had Shakespeare written the play a few years later, we may be certain that the gardener and his servants (iii. 4) would not have uttered stately speeches in verse, but would have spoken homely prose, and that humour would have mingled with the pathos of the scene. The same remark may be made with reference to the subsequent scene (v. 5) in which his groom visits the dethroned king in the Tower." Comic characters and those in low life generally speak in prose in the later plays, as Dowden intimates, but in the very earliest ones doggerel verse is much used instead. See on 10 above.

The change from prose to verse is well illustrated in the third scene of the *M. of V.* It begins with plain prosaic talk about a business matter; but when Antonio enters, it rises at once to the higher level of poetry. The sight of Antonio reminds Shylock of his hatred of the Merchant, and the passion expresses itself in verse, the vernacular tongue of poetry. We have a similar change in the first scene of *J. C.*, where, after the quibbling "chaff" of the mechanics about their trades, the mention of Pompey reminds the

Tribune of their plebeian fickleness, and his scorn and indignation flame out in most eloquent verse.

The reasons for the choice of prose or verse are not always so clear as in these instances. We are seldom puzzled to explain the prose, but not unfrequently we meet with verse where we might expect prose. As Professor Corson remarks (*Introduction to Shakespeare*, 1889), "Shakespeare adopted verse as the general tenor of his language, and therefore expressed much in verse that is within the capabilities of prose; in other words, his verse constantly encroaches upon the domain of prose, but his prose can never be said to encroach upon the domain of verse." If in rare instances we think we find exceptions to this latter statement, and prose actually seems to usurp the place of verse, I believe that careful study of the passage will prove the supposed exception to be apparent rather than real. For a marked instance in this play (ii. 2. 309 fol.: "This goodly frame, the earth," etc.) see *Appendix*, p. 322, below.

Some Books for Teachers and Students. — A few out of the many books that might be commended to the teacher and the critical student are the following: Halliwell-Phillipps's *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare* (7th ed. 1887); Sidney Lee's *Life of Shakespeare* (1898; for ordinary students the abridged ed. of 1899 is preferable); Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon* (3d ed. 1902); Littledale's ed. of Dyce's *Glossary* (1902); Bartlett's *Concordance to Shakespeare* (1895); Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar* (1873); Furness's "New Variorum" ed. of *Hamlet* (1877; encyclopædic and exhaustive); Dowden's *Shakspere: His Mind and Art* (American ed. 1881); Hudson's *Life, Art, and Characters of Shakespeare* (revised ed. 1882); Mrs. Jameson's *Characteristics of Women* (several eds., some with the title, *Shakespeare Heroines*); Ten Brink's *Five Lectures on Shakespeare* (1895); Boas's *Shakespeare and His Predecessors* (1895); Dyer's *Folk-lore of Shakespeare* (American ed. 1884); Gervinus's *Shakespeare Commentaries* (Bunnett's translation, 1875); Wordsworth's *Shakespeare's Knowledge of the Bible* (3d ed. 1880); Elson's *Shakespeare in Music* (1901).

Some of the above books will be useful to all readers who are interested in special subjects or in general criticism of Shakespeare. Among those which are better suited to the needs of ordinary readers and students, the following may be mentioned: Mabie's *William Shakespeare, Poet, Dramatist, and Man* (1900); Phin's *Cyclopedia and Glossary of Shakespeare* (1902; more compact and cheaper than Dyce); Dowden's *Shakspere Primer* (1877; small but invaluable); Rolfe's *Shakespeare the Boy* (1896; treating of the home and school life, the games and sports, the manners, customs, and folk-lore of the poet's time); Guerber's *Myths of Greece and Rome* (for young students who may need information on mythological allusions not explained in the notes).

Black's *Judith Shakespeare* (1884; a novel, but a careful study of the scene and the time) is a book that I always commend to young people, and their elders will also enjoy it. The Lambs' *Tales from Shakespeare* is a classic for beginners in the study of the dramatist; and in Rolfe's ed. the plan of the authors is carried out in the Notes by copious illustrative quotations from the plays. Mrs. Cowden-Clarke's *Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines* (several eds.) will particularly interest girls; and both girls and boys will find Bennett's *Master Skylark* (1897) and Imogen Clark's *Will Shakespeare's Little Lad* (1897) equally entertaining and instructive.

H. Snowden Ward's *Shakespeare's Town and Times* (1896) and John Leyland's *Shakespeare Country* (1900) are copiously illustrated books (yet inexpensive) which may be particularly commended for school libraries.

Abbreviations in the Notes. — The abbreviations of the names of Shakespeare's plays will be readily understood; as *T. N.* for *Twelfth Night*, *Cor.* for *Coriolanus*, 3 *Hen. VI.* for *The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth*, etc. *P. P.* refers to *The Passionate Pilgrim*; *V. and A.* to *Venus and Adonis*; *L. C.* to *A Lover's Complaint*; and *Sonn.* to the *Sonnets*.

Other abbreviations that hardly need explanation are *Cf.* (*confer*,

compare), *Fol.* (following), *Id.* (*idem*, the same), and *Prol.* (prologue). The numbers of the lines in the references (except for the present play) are those of the "Globe" edition (the cheapest and best edition of *Shakespeare* in one compact volume), which is now generally accepted as the standard for line-numbers in works of reference (Schmidt's *Lexicon*, Abbott's *Grammar*, Dowden's *Primer*, the publications of the New Shakspere Society, etc.).

ACT I

SCENE I. — In the quartos the acts and scenes are not marked; in the folios they are indicated only as far as ii. 2.

Elsinore. The scene is at the celebrated castle of Kronborg (see cut on p. 25), commanding the entrance of the Sound. In its vaults the mythic Danish champion Holger was thought to be seated at the board, asleep for age after age, till the day of fate awakens him.

1. *Who 's there?* Coleridge says: "That S. meant to put an effect in the actor's power in these very first words is evident from the impatience expressed by the startled Francisco in the line that follows. A brave man is never so peremptory as when he fears that he is afraid."

2. *Me.* Emphatic; as the measure shows.

3. *Long live the king!* Probably the watchword of the night. Horatio and Marcellus in 15 below give a different response to the same challenge, but Francisco has been relieved from duty as sentinel.

6. *Upon your hour.* Just at your hour. Cf. *Rich. III.* iii. 2. 5: "upon the stroke of four;" *M. for M.* iv. 1. 17: "much upon this time," etc. Cf. the modern "on time."

8. *Much thanks. Thanks* is a quasi-singular, as regularly in S.

9. *Sick at heart.* Furness quotes Strachey: "The key-note of the tragedy is struck in the simple preludings of this common sen-

try's midnight guard, to sound afterwards in ever-spreading vibrations through the complicated though harmonious strains of Hamlet's own watch through a darker and colder night than the senses can feel."

13. *Rivals.* Partners, companions. S. does not use the word again in this sense. We find, however, *corrival* = companion in 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 4. 31, and *rivality* = partnership in *A. and C.* iii. 5. 8.

15. *Dane.* King of Denmark; as in i. 2. 44 below.

16. *Give you good night.* That is, *God* give, etc. For other contractions of like greetings, cf. *A. Y. L.* v. 1. 16: "God ye good even;" *R. and J.* i. 2. 58: "God gi' good-den;" *Hen. V.* iii. 2. 89: "God-den," etc. We have the full form in *L. L. L.* iv. 2. 84: "God give you good morrow," etc.

19. *A piece of him.* As we say, "something like him." It seems to be a playful reference to the darkness of the night.

21. *This thing.* As Dowden remarks, this "need not imply doubt or disrespect." Cf. *Cor.* iv. 5. 122: "Thou noble thing!" (addressed to Coriolanus).

23. *Fantasy.* Imagination; as in 54 below. Cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* v. 4. 138: "Or is it fantasy that plays upon our eyesight?" For another sense see iv. 4. 61 below; and for another (= love), *M. N. D.* i. 1. 32, *A. Y. L.* ii. 4. 31, v. 2. 100, etc.

25. *Seen of us.* *Of* = *by* is very common in S. Cf. iv. 2. 12 below.

29. *Approve.* Prove, confirm. Cf. *M. of V.* iii. 2. 79: "approve it with a text," etc.

33. *What,* etc. As to what, etc. *Sit we* is first person imperative; or, as some call it, subjunctive = suppose we sit. Cf. 168 below: "Break we our watch up," etc.

36. *Pole.* Pole-star; as in *Oth.* ii. 1. 15: "the ever-fixed pole." Clarke remarks: "Nothing more natural than for a sentinel to watch the course of a particular star while on his lonely midnight watch; and what a radiance of poetry is shed on the passage by the casual allusion!"

37. *Illume.* Used nowhere else by S. He has *illuminate* twice, and *illumine* three times.

40. *Thee.* Apparently = *thou*, as often after imperatives.

42. *Scholar.* Alluding to the use of Latin in exorcisms. Cf. *Much Ado*, ii. 1. 264: "I would to God some scholar would conjure her!" Reed quotes Beaumont and Fletcher, *Night Walker*, ii. 1:—

> "Let 's call the butler up, for he speaks Latin,
> And that will daunt the devil."

In like manner the honest butler in Addison's *Drummer* recommends the steward to speak Latin to the ghost.

44. *Harrows.* Steevens quotes Milton, *Comus*, 565: "Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear." Cf. i. 5. 16 below.

45. *It would be spoke to. Would* is often used in the sense of *wish* or *desire*. It was supposed that a ghost cannot speak until it is spoken to.

46. *Usurp'st.* Zeugma: the Ghost invades the night and assumes the form of the king.

49. *Sometimes.* Used by S. interchangeably with *sometime* = formerly. Cf. *Rich. II.* i. 2. 54, *Hen. VIII.* ii. 4. 181, etc.

55. *On 't.* Of it; a common use of *on*.

57. *Sensible.* Adjectives ending in *-ble*, *-ful*, *-ive*, *-less*, etc., are often used like this in both an active and a passive sense. *Avouch* is not elsewhere made a noun by S. For other examples of verbs used as nouns, see 73 ("cast"), iii. 1. 170 ("hatch" and "disclose"), iv. 5. 64 ("remove"), v. 2. 23 ("supervise"), v. 2. 224 ("repair"), etc.

60. *Armour.* Furness asks: "Was this the very armour that he wore thirty years before, on the day Hamlet was born (see v. 1. 148–154)? How old is Horatio?" But, as Dowden suggests, the armour might "be remembered and pointed out when worn later."

61. *Norway.* The King of Norway.

62. *Parle.* Parley; as in *K. John*, ii. 1. 205.

63. *Sledded Polacks.* Polanders on sleds or sledges. The 1st quarto has "sleaded pollax," the 1st and 2d folios "sledded Pollax" (changed to "Polax" in the 3d and "Poleaxe" in the 4th folio). The Germans, who have been much troubled by the passage, generally adopt "Pole-axe." Schmidt explains *sledded* as "probably = having a sled or sledge, that is, a heavy hammer to it, or similar to a heavy hammer." He adds, "Hamlet, provoked to anger in a conference with the king of Norway, struck the ice with his pole-axe as with a heavy hammer." The objection to this interpretation is the utter insignificance of the act, — like stamping his foot on the ice. The *frown* might be remembered as characteristic by one who had seen it, but to add the mention of the act would be a most "lame and impotent conclusion" to the statement. *Sled* (familiar in New England) for *sledge* is found in Cotgrave's *French Dict.* For *Polack* = Polander or Polish, cf. ii. 2. 63, 75, iv. 4. 23, and v. 2. 383 below; also Webster, *White Devil:* "Like a shav'd Polack." S. uses the word in no other play, and *sledded* only here.

65. *Jump.* The quarto reading; the folios have "just," which means the same. Cf. v. 2. 382 below: "jump upon this bloody question." See also *Oth.* ii. 3. 392. For *dead* cf. i. 2. 198 below: "the dead vast and middle of the night." See also *Sonn.* 43. 11, *Hen. V.* iii. chor. 19, *Rich. III.* v. 3. 180, etc.

67, 68. *In what,* etc. I know not what particular line of thought to follow, but in a general way my opinion is, etc.

70. *Good now.* For this "vocative use" of *good* (with or without *now*), cf. *Temp.* i. 1. 3, 16, 20, *C. of E.* iv. 4. 22, *T. and C.* iii. 1. 122, *A. and C.* i. 2. 25, etc.

72. *Toils.* For the transitive use, cf. *M. N. D.* v. 1. 74: "have toiled their memories;" 2 *Hen. VI.* i. 1. 83: "toil his wits," etc. *Subject* is used collectively (= people) as in i. 2. 33 below. Cf. *M. for M.* iii. 2. 145, v. 1. 14, *W. T.* i. 1. 43, etc.

74. *Mart.* Marketing, buying. The word is also used as a verb (= buy or sell); as in *W. T.* iv. 4. 363, *J. C.* iv. 3. 11, etc.

75. *Impress.* Impressment; as in *T. and C.* ii. 1. 107 and *A. and C.* iii. 7. 37. Lord Campbell remarks: "Such confidence has there been in Shakespeare's accuracy that this passage has been quoted both by text-writers and by judges on the bench as an authority upon the legality of the *press-gang*, and upon the debated question whether *shipwrights*, as well as *common seamen*, are liable to be pressed into the service of the royal navy."

77. *Toward.* At hand, forthcoming. Cf. *M. N. D.* iii. 1. 81: "a play toward," etc. See also v. 2. 372 below.

82. *Fortinbras.* According to Latham, a corrupt French form, equivalent to *Fierumbras* or *Fierabras*, which is a derivative from *ferri brachium* (arm of iron). The final *s* should be pronounced in S. As a rule, French and other foreign words are anglicized in the plays. This is sometimes evident from the rhyme; as in *L. L. L.* v. 2. 334, where *Boyet* rhymes with *debt.*

83. *Emulate.* Emulous. Used by S. only here. Cf. *adulterate*, i. 5. 42 below.

84. *The combat.* "That is, the combat that ends all dispute."

86. *Compact.* Always accented on the last syllable by S. except in 1 *Hen. VI.* v. 4. 163, which may not be his.

87. *Law and heraldry.* Schmidt explains this as = "heraldic law," or "law of heraldry." Moberly says: "Law would be wanted to draw up accurately the contract, heraldry to give it a binding force in honour; as the court of chivalry 'has cognizance of contracts touching deeds of arms or of war out of the realm.'"

89. *Seiz'd of.* Possessed of; still a legal term.

90. *Moiety.* Strictly a half (as in *A. W.* iii. 2. 69, *Hen. V.* v. 2. 229, etc.), but often used by S. for any portion. Cf. *M. of V.* iv. 1. 26, 1 *Hen. IV.* iii. 1. 96, etc.

93. *Covenant.* The folio has "cou'nant," the quartos "comart." Some think that S. may have coined the latter word (= joint bargain), and afterwards changed it to *covenant.*

94. *Carriage*, etc. The tenor of the article as drawn up.

96. *Unimproved.* "Not regulated or guided by knowledge or

experience" (Johnson); "not yet turned to account, unemployed" (Schmidt).

97. *Skirts.* Cf. *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 354: "here in the skirts of the forest, like fringe upon a petticoat."

98. *Shark'd up.* Picked up without distinction (Steevens) or illegally (Schmidt). *List* = muster-roll, as in i. 2. 32 below. Adjectives and participles are often used as nouns by S. and sometimes, like *resolutes* here, take the plural form.

99. *For food and diet.* "For no pay but their keep."

100. *Stomach.* Courage; with possibly a play on the other sense, as in *T. G. of V.* i. 2. 68 and *Hen. V.* iii. 7. 166.

102. *But.* In the sense of *except*, where we should use *than*. See also 108 below.

103. *Compulsative.* The folio reading; the quartos have "compulsatory." S. uses neither word elsewhere, but he has "compulsive" in iii. 4. 86 below and in *Oth.* iii. 3. 454.

107. *Romage.* Bustle, turmoil. S. uses the word only here.

108. *Be.* The word expresses more doubt than *is* after a verb of thinking.

109. *Sort.* Suit, accord; as in *M. N. D.* v. 1. 55, etc.

112. *Mote.* In three of the quartos it is spelt "moth," which probably had the same pronunciation.

114. *Mightiest.* Used like the Latin superlative = very mighty. On the passage, cf. *J. C.* ii. 2. 18 fol.

117. *As stars*, etc. There is some corruption here, and perhaps a line has dropped out. The attempts to mend the passage have not been satisfactory. *Disaster* (like *influence*, *aspect*, *retrograde*, etc.) was an astrological term. It is used as a verb in *A. and C.* ii. 7. 18.

118. *The moist star.* The moon. Cf. *W. T.* i. 2. 1: "the watery star;" and *M. N. D.* ii. 1. 162: "the watery moon." On the next line cf. *W. T.* i. 2. 427:" —

"You may as well
Forbid the sea for to obey the moon;"

121. *Precurse.* Used by S. only here; and *precursor* only in *Temp.* i. 2. 201. *Fierce* = wild, terrible. It means "immoderate, excessive" in *T. of A.* iv. 2. 30 and *Hen. VIII.* i. 1. 54.

122. *Still.* Constantly, always; as often.

123. *Omen.* The event portended by the omen. S. uses the word nowhere else.

124. *Demonstrated.* Accented on first syllable, as in *Hen. V.* iv. 2. 54; but on the second in *T. of A.* i. 1. 91, *Oth.* i. 1. 61, etc.

125. *Climatures.* Regions; used by S. only here. For *climate* in the same sense, see *Rich. II.* iv. 1. 130 and *J. C.* i. 3. 32.

127. *Cross it.* It was supposed that whoever crossed the spot on which a spectre was seen became subject to its malignant influence. Among the reasons for supposing the young Earl of Derby (who died in 1594) to have been bewitched, Lodge states that the figure of a tall man appeared in his chamber "who twice crossed him swiftly," and when the earl came to the place where he saw the apparition "he fell sick."

130. *If there be any good thing*, etc. Alluding to the idea that a ghost may often be "laid" when a living person does for him what he himself ought to have done when alive.

134. *Happily.* According to Nares and Schmidt = *haply*, as often; but it may be = luckily, as some critics make it. For the structure of this solemn appeal, cf. that of a very different strain in *A. Y. L.* ii. 4. 33–42.

136. *Or if thou hast*, etc. Steevens quotes Dekker, *Knight's Conjuring:* "If any of them had bound the spirit of gold by any charmes in caves, or in iron fetters under the ground, they should for their own soules quiet (which questionlesse else would whine up and down) if not for the good of their children, release it."

138. *They say.* Clarke notes the propriety of these words in the mouth of Horatio, "the scholar and the unbeliever in ghosts."

140. *Partisan.* A kind of halberd. Cf. *R. and J.* i. 80. 101, *A. and C.* ii. 7. 14, etc.

143. *Majestical.* Used by S. oftener than *majestic.* Cf. *Hen. V.* iii. chor. 16, iv. 1. 284, etc.

145. *As the air, invulnerable.* Cf. *Mach.* v. 8. 9 and *K. John,* ii. 1. 252.

149. *I have heard,* etc. Cf. *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 381 fol., and Milton, *Hymn on Nativ.* 229–234, etc.

150. *The trumpet,* etc. For *trumpet* = trumpeter, cf. *Hen. V.* iv. 2. 61: "I will the banner from a trumpet take," etc. Malone quotes from *England's Parnassus,* 1600: "And now the cocke, the morning's trumpeter."

153. *Whether in sea,* etc. According to the theories of that time, every element was inhabited by its peculiar order of spirits. Cf. Milton, *Il Pens.* 93:—

> "And of those demons that are found
> In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
> Whose power hath a true consent
> With planet or with element."

154. *Extravagant.* In its etymological sense of *wandering beyond* its *confine,* or limit. Cf. *L. L. L.* iv. 2. 68: "a foolish extravagant spirit;" and *Oth.* i. 1. 137: "an extravagant and wheeling stranger," S. uses the word only in these passages, and *extravagancy* (= vagrancy) only in *T. N.* ii. 1. 12. So *erring* is used in its literal sense; as in *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 138 and *Oth.* i. 3. 362.

155. For the accent of *confine,* cf. *Temp.* iv. 1. 121, Sonn. 84. 3, etc.; for the other one, see *Rich. II.* i. 3. 137, *Rich. III.* iv. 4. 3, etc.

156. *Probation.* Proof; as in *Mach.* iii. 1. 80, *Cymb.* v. 5. 362, etc. The word is here a quadrisyllable.

158. *'Gainst.* Used metaphorically of time, as in *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 99: "against she do appear," etc. Cf. iii. 4. 50 below.

161. *Spirit.* Monosyllabic, as often.

162. *Strike.* Exert a malign influence. Cf. *T. A.* ii. 4. 14: "If I do wake, some planet strike me down." See also *Cor.* ii. 2. 117 and *W. T.* i. 2. 201. Cf. "moonstruck."

163. *Takes.* Bewitches, blasts. Furness quotes Florio: "*Assiderare:* to blast or strike with a planet, to be taken." Cf. *M. W.* iv. 4. 32: "blasts the tree and takes the cattle;" *Lear*, ii. 4. 166: "taking airs;" *Id.* iii. 4. 61: "Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking!" and *A. and C.* iv. 2. 37: "Now the witch take me, if I meant it thus!"

164. *Gracious.* Blessed, benign; "partaking of the nature of the epithet with which it is associated."

165. *And do in part believe it.* "A happy expression of the half-sceptical, half-complying spirit of Shakespeare's time, when witchcraft was believed, antipodes doubted" (Moberly).

166, 167. *But look, the morn*, etc. As Hunter suggests, Milton must have had this beautiful personification in mind when he wrote *P. L.* v. 1: —

> "Now morn, her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
> Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearls."

173. *Loves.* This use of the plural in abstract nouns, when more than one person is concerned, was common. Cf. i. 2. 15 and 251 below.

Scene II. — 1. "In the King's speech, observe the set and pedantically antithetic form of the sentences when touching that which galled the heels of conscience, — the strain of undignified rhetoric, — and yet in what follows concerning the public weal, a certain appropriate majesty" (Coleridge).

2. *That.* Often so used instead of a conjunction (*though* here) that would otherwise be repeated.

4. *Brow of woe.* "Mourning brow" (*L. L. L.* v. 2. 754). Cf. iv. 6. 19: "thieves of mercy;" *M. of V.* ii. 8. 42: "mind of love," etc.

6. *With wisest sorrow.* With due proportion of sorrow.

8. *Sometime.* The folio has "sometimes." S. uses both forms adjectively. Cf. *Rich. II.* i. 2. 54: "thy sometimes brother's wife;"

Id. v. 1. 37: "good sometime queen," etc. See on i. 1. 49 above.

10. *Defeated.* Marred, disfigured. Cf. *Oth.* i. 3. 346: "defeat thy favour with an usurped beard." So *defeature* = disfigurement in *V. and A.* 736, *C. of E.* ii. 1. 98 and v. 1. 299.

11. *One . . . one.* So in the folio; the quartos have "an . . . a." Cf. *W. T.* v. 2. 80: "She had one eye declined for the loss of her husband, another elevated that the oracle was fulfilled."

14. *To wife.* Cf. *Temp.* ii. 1. 75: "Such a paragon to their queen," etc. *To* is often so used. *Barr'd* = excluded, acted without the concurrence of. Cf. *Hen. V.* i. 2. 12, 92, *Lear*, v. 3. 85, etc.

15. *Wisdoms.* See on *loves*, i. 1. 173 above.

17. *That you know.* What you already know.

18. *Supposal.* Opinion; used by S. only here.

20. *Disjoint.* For the contracted form cf. iii. 1. 159: "most deject." See also iii. 4. 180, 205, and iv. 5. 2.

21. *Colleagued*, etc. With no ally but this imaginary advantage.

22. *Pester.* The word originally meant to crowd disagreeably; as in Milton, *Comus*, 7: "Confin'd and pester'd in this pinfold here." Cf. *Cor.* iv. 6. 7: "Dissentious numbers pestering streets," etc.

23. *Importing.* Cf. *T. of A.* v. 2. 11:—

> "With letters of entreaty, which imported
> His fellowship i' the cause;"

Oth. ii. 2. 3: "tidings now arrived, importing the mere perdition of the Turkish fleet," etc. See also iv. 7. 80 and v. 2. 21 below.

27. *Writ.* For the past tense S. uses *writ* oftener than *wrote*; for the participle he has usually *writ* or *written*, sometimes *wrote*.

31. *Gait.* Procedure. *In that* = inasmuch as.

32. *Proportions.* Contingents, quotas; as in *Hen. V.* i. 2. 137, 304, etc.

33. *Subject.* See on i. 1. 72 above.

38. *Dilated.* Detailed. Cf. *A. W.* ii. 1. 59: "a more dilated fare-

well." On the "confusion of construction" in *allow*, Knight remarks: "We find in all the old dramatists many such lines as this in Marlowe: 'The *outside* of her garments *were* of lawn.' And too many such lines have been corrected by the editors of Shakespeare who have thus obliterated the traces of our tongue's history."

39. *Let your haste*, etc. Dispatch the business with commendable promptness.

41. *Nothing*. Adverbially = not at all; as often in S. Cf. *M. of V.* i. 1. 165: "nothing undervalued to Cato's daughter," etc.

45. *Lose your voice*. Waste your words. Cf. 118 below: "lose her prayers."

47. *Native*. Naturally related. Cf. *A. W.* i. 1. 238: "native things" (that is, kindred things).

51. *Leave and favour*. Kind permission.

56. *Pardon*. "Almost = leave, permission" (Schmidt). Cf. *A. and C.* iii. 6. 60: "His pardon for return." See also iii. 2. 310 below.

59. *Laboursome*. Cf. *Cymb.* iii. 4. 167: "laboursome (= elaborate) and dainty trims." S. uses the word only twice, *laborious* not at all.

63. *And thy best graces*, etc. "May the fairest graces that you are master of help you to spend the time at your will" (Moberly).

64. *Cousin*. Nephew. Elsewhere it means niece (as in *A. Y. L.* i. 2. 164, i. 3. 44, etc.), uncle (*T. N.* i. 5. 131, v. 1. 313), brother-in-law (1 *Hen. IV.* iii. 1. 51), and grandchild (*K. John*, iii. 3. 17, *Oth.* i. 1. 113, etc.). It is also used as a mere complimentary form of address between princes, etc. (*Hen. V.* v. 2. 4, *Rich. III.* iii. 4. 37, etc.).

65. *A little more than kin*, etc. If Hamlet refers to himself, the meaning seems to be: more than a mere kinsman (being step-son as well as nephew) and less than kind (because I hate you). If he applies them to the king, we may accept the paraphrase of White: "In marrying my mother you have made yourself something more

than my kinsman, and at the same time have shown yourself unworthy of our race, our kind." Collier quotes Rowley, *Search for Money*, 1609; "I would he were not so near us in kindred, then sure he would be nearer in kindness." Steevens compares Lyly, *Mother Bombie*, 1594: "the nearer we are in blood, the further we must be from love; the greater the kindred is, the less the kindness must be;" and *Gorboduc*, 1561: "In kinde a father, but not kindelynesse."

67. *Too much i' the sun.* There may be an allusion to the old proverb, "Out of heaven's blessing into the warm sun" (*Lear*, ii. 2. 168), that is, "out of house and home," — in Hamlet's case, deprived of his right, or the succession to the throne. Possibly, as Dowden suggests, there may be a play on *sun* and *son*: "too much in the sunshine of the court, and too much in the relation of son — son to a dead father, son to an incestuous mother, son to an uncle-father;" but this seems somewhat forced.

68. *Nighted.* Black as night. S. uses the word again in *Lear*, iv. 5. 13: "his nighted life." Scarlet was the colour then worn by the kings, queens, and princes of Denmark. Knight says: "It thus happens, curiously enough, that the objections of the queen and Claudius to the appearance of Hamlet in black are authorized, not only by the well-known custom of the early Danes never to mourn for their nearest and dearest relatives and friends, but also by the fact that, although black was at least their favourite, if not, indeed, their national colour, Hamlet, as a prince of the blood, should have been attired in the royal scarlet."

69. *Denmark.* The king; as in 125 below. Cf. *Norway* in 28 above.

70. *Vailed lids.* Downcast eyes. Cf. *V. and A.* 956: "She vail'd her eyelids;" *M. of V.* i. 1. 28; "Vailing her high top lower than her ribs," etc. We have a play on the word in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*: "Vail'd to the ground, veiling her eyelids close."

74. *Ay, madam*, etc. Cf. Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, vi.: —

"That loss is common would not make
My own less bitter; rather more:
Too common! never morning wore
To evening but some heart did break."

77. *Inky.* Again used metaphorically in *A. Y. L.* iii. 5. 46. "your inky brows."

81. *Haviour.* Often printed "'haviour," but not a contraction of that word.

83. *Denote.* Indicate, mark. Cf. *Sonn.* 148. 7, *Oth.* iii. 3. 428, iv. 1. 290, etc.

85. *Passeth.* As Corson remarks, the older form suits the tone of the passage better, and avoids the concurrence of sibilants.

87. *Commendable.* Accented on the first syllable, as regularly in S. (cf. *Much Ado*, iii. 1. 71, 73, etc.), with the single exception (which Schmidt considers doubtful) of *M. of V.* i. 1. 111.

90. *That father*, etc. That lost father lost his; or, That father (who was) lost lost his. *Bound* = was bound. For the ellipsis, cf. iii. 3. 62 below.

92. *Obsequious.* Funereal; from *obsequies*; as in *T. A.* v. 3. 152 and *Sonn.* 31. 5. Cf. the adverb *obsequiously* in *Rich. III.* i. 2. 3. *Persever* is the regular spelling and accent in S. Cf. *A. W.* iv. 2. 36, 37, where it rhymes with *ever*.

93. *Condolement.* Sorrow, mourning. Used by S. only here and (blunderingly) in *Per.* ii. 1. 156, which, however, is not his.

95. *Incorrect.* Contumacious, unsubmissive; used by S. only here, like *unfortified* (= weak) in the next line.

97. *Simple.* Foolish.

99. *Any the most.* Cf. *Cymb.* i. 4. 65: "any the rarest." *To sense* depends on *vulgar*, and is = "anything the most commonly perceived."

104. *Who.* Not infrequently used for *which*.

107. *Unprevailing.* Unavailing. So *prevail* = avail in *R. and J.* iii. 3. 60: "It helps not, it prevails not." Cf. Peele, *Sir Clyomon*,

1599: "pursuit prevaileth nought;" Marlowe, *Dido*, v. 2: "What can my tears or cries prevail me now?"

109. *Immediate.* Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 5. 42:—

> "My due from thee is this imperial crown,
> Which, as immediate from thy place and blood,
> Derives itself to me."

112. *Impart.* Probably one of the many instances of "confusion of construction" in S. Cf. i. 3. 50 below. As Delius suggests, the poet probably regarded *no less nobility of love* as the object of *impart*, and forgot, owing to the intermediate clause, that he had written *with no less*.

113. *Wittenberg.* The university of Wittenberg was founded in 1502, and is mentioned in Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* and other English books of the time. For *school* = university, cf. *A. Y. L.* i. 1. 6.

114. *Retrograde.* Contrary; an astrological term. Cf. *A. W.* i. 1. 212, where Parolles says he was born "under Mars," and Helena sarcastically remarks, "When he was retrograde, I think." See on i. 1. 117 above.

115. *Bend you.* Bend yourself, be inclined. Cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* v. 5. 36: "bend you with your dearest speed."

120. *In all my best.* Cf. *Oth.* iii. 4. 127: "I have spoken for you all my best." In i. 5. 27 below we have "in the best" where we should say "at the best."

124. *Sits smiling to my heart.* The meaning is clear, but the expression is peculiar. Cf. *Cor.* iv. 2. 48:—

> "it would unclog my heart
> Of what lies heavy to 't;"

and *M. for M.* v. 1. 394: "Your brother's death, I know, sits at your heart."

127. *Rouse.* Bumper; as in *Oth.* ii. 3. 66. Cf. i. 4. 8 and ii. 1. 58 below. See also Marlowe, *Dr. Faustus*, iii. 4: "He took his rouse

with stoups of Rhenish wine;" Massinger, *Duke of Milan*, i. 1: "Stands bound to take his rouse;" *Bondman*, ii. 3: "another rouse!" etc. *Bruit* = noise abroad; as in *Macb.* v. 7. 22, etc.

The Danish court in the time of S. was known throughout Europe for its intemperance. Sir John Harrington in 1606 refers as follows to the visit of Christian IV. of Denmark (uncle of Anne, queen of James I.) to England: "From the day the Danish king came, until this hour, I have been well nigh overwhelmed with carousal, and sports of all kinds. . . . I think the Dane hath strangely wrought on our good English nobles; for those whom I could never get to taste good liquor, now follow the fashion, and wallow in beastly delights. The ladies abandon their sobriety, and are seen to roll about in intoxication. I do often say (but not aloud) that the Danes have again conquered the Britains; for I see no man, or woman either, that can now command himself or herself."

129. *Too, too.* Used as at present, not like the *too-too* of *M. of V.* ii. 6. 42, etc., which is less emphatic.

On the passage, Moberly remarks: "The base affinities of our nature are ever present to Hamlet's mind. Here he thinks of the body as hiding from us the freshness, life, and nobleness of God's creation. If it were to pass away, silently and spontaneously, like the mist on a mountain side, or if, curtain-like, we might tear it down by an act of violence, it may be that we should see quite another prospect; at any rate, the vile things now before us would be gone forever."

130. *Resolve.* Cf. *L. C.* 296: "resolv'd my reason into tears;" *T. of A.* iv. 3. 442: —

> "The sea 's a thief, whose liquid surge resolves
> The moon into salt tears."

132. *Canon.* "Theobald first pointed out that this did not refer to a piece of artillery, but to a divine decree" (Furness). Wordsworth (*Shakespeare's Knowledge and Use of the Bible*) says: "Unless it be the Sixth Commandment, the *canon* must be one of natural religion." Cf. *Cymb.* iii. 4. 77: —

"Against self-slaughter
There is a prohibition so divine
That cravens my weak hand."

137. *Merely.* Absolutely, completely; as in *Temp.* i. 1. 59: "We are merely cheated of our lives," etc.

140. *Hyperion.* Apollo. Cf. *Hen. V.* iv. 1. 292, *T. and C.* ii. 3. 207, etc. The accent is properly on the penult, but the general usage of English poets has thrown it back. Even an accomplished classical scholar like Gray could write: "Hyperion's march and glittering shafts of war." *To* is often thus used in comparisons. Cf. *Temp.* i. 2. 480, *C. of E.* i. 2. 35, etc. See also i. 5. 52 and iii. 1. 52 below.

141. *Might not beteem.* Could not allow. S. uses *beteem* again in *M. N. D.* i. 1. 131.

142. *Visit.* S. sometimes omits the *to* of the infinitive where it would now be inserted, and *vice versa.*

147. *Or ere.* A reduplication, *or* being = before, as in 183 below.

149. *Niobe.* Again alluded to in *T. and C.* v. 10. 19: "Make wells and Niobes of the maids and wives."

150. *Discourse of reason.* The reasoning faculty. The phrase occurs again in *T. and C.* ii. 2. 116, and "discourse of thought" in *Oth.* iv. 2. 153. Cf. "reason and discourse" in *M. for M.* i. 2. 190, and "discourse" in iv. 4. 36 below.

153. *Hercules.* Cf. ii. 2. 373 below. Allusions to Hercules are very common in S.

155. *Left the flushing.* Ceased to produce redness. Cf. iii. 4. 34 below: "Leave wringing of your hands," etc. Some would make *flush* = to fill with water; but the word here is probably used in the other sense. On *galled eyes,* cf. *Rich. III.* iv. 4. 53 and *T. and C.* v. 3. 55.

157. *Dexterity.* The idea of adroitness in the word seems to have suggested to S. that of quickness. Cf. *R. of L.* 1389, *M. W.* iv. 5. 121 and 1 *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 286.

158. *Nor it cannot.* Cf. iii. 2. 194 below: "nor 't is not strange," etc.

159. *Break.* Subjunctive or 3d person imperative; not 2d person imperative, as many eds. make it by putting a comma after it.

163. *Change.* Exchange. Johnson explains the passage: "I 'll be your servant, you shall be my friend;" but it may mean simply, "I 'll exchange the name of *friend* with you."

164. *What make you?* What are you doing? Cf. *Oth.* iii. 4. 169: "What make you from home?" The phrase is common in S. and is quibbled upon in *L. L. L.* iv. 3. 190 fol. and *Rich. III.* i. 3. 164 fol. See ii. 2. 276 below.

167. *Good even, sir.* Addressed to Bernardo, whom Hamlet does not recognize.

177. *I pray thee.* As Corson remarks, this reading of the folio is better than "I prithee," an earnest entreaty being meant.

179. *Upon.* Often used adverbially after *look.* Cf. *Rich. II.* iv. 1. 237, *W. T.* v. 3. 100, etc.

180. *Bak'd meats.* We have "bakemeats" in *Gen.* xl. 17 (printed with a hyphen in the ed. of 1611,) and "bake mete" in Chaucer, *C. T.* 343. It was an old custom to furnish a cold entertainment for the mourners at a funeral. Collins quotes the old romance of *Syr Degore*:—

> "A great feaste would he holde
> Upon his quenes mornynge day,
> That was buryed in an abbay;"

and Malone adds from Hayward's *Life and Raigne of King Henrie the Fourth*, 1599: "Then hee [Richard II.] was . . . obscurely interred,—without the charge of a dinner for celebrating the funeral." The custom did not continue long after the time of S., for Flecknoe, in his *Ænigmatical Characters*, 1665, says of "a curious glutton" that when he dies he "onely regrets that funeral feasts are quite left off, else he should have the pleasure of one feast more (in imagination at least) even after death."

182. *Dearest foe.* Cf. *A. Y. L.* i. 3. 34: "my father hated his father dearly," etc. *Dear* and *dearly* were often used of disagreeable affections.

183. *Or ever I had.* See on 147 above.

185. *In my mind's eye.* Cf. *R. of L.* 1426: "unseen, save to the eye of mind;" Chaucer, *C. T.* 4972: "with eyen of his mynde."

187. *A man.* Edwin Booth made a pause after *man*, as if the word implied something higher than *king*.

190. *Saw? who?* Some eds. print "Saw who?" and Dyce says that the Kembles, Kean, and Macready gave the words as a single question. *Who* and *whom* are often confused by S.

192. *Season* Qualify, temper; as in ii. 1. 28 below. Cf. *M. of V.* iv. 1. 197: "When mercy seasons justice." *Admiration* = astonishment (its original sense), as in iii. 2. 320 below.

193. *Attent.* Attentive; used again in *Per.* iii. prol. 11: "Be attent." Spenser uses it as a noun in *F. Q.* iii. 9. 52: "With vigilant regard and dew attent;" and *Id.* vi. 9. 37: "And kept her sheepe with diligent attent." *Deliver* = relate, as in 209 and v. 2. 393 below. Cf. *Temp.* ii. 1. 45, v. 1. 313, etc.

198. *Vast.* *Vast*, like *waste* (the reading of the folio) = void, emptiness. Cf. *Temp.* i. 2. 327: "that vast of night."

200. *At point.* The folio has "at all points." Cf. *Rich. II.* i. 3. 2: "Yea, at all points;" Spenser, *F. Q.* i. 1. 16: "Armed to point;" *Id.* i. 2. 12: "all armde to point," etc. *Cap-a-pe* = cap-à-pied, from head to foot; used again in *W. T.* iv. 4. 761: "I am courtier cap-a-pe." Cf. 228 below.

204. *Distill'd.* Melted. Dyce quotes Sylvester, *Du Bartas:* "Melt thee, distill thee, turne to wax or snow."

205. *Act.* Action, operation. Cf. *Oth.* iii. 3. 330: "with a little act upon the blood."

207. *Dreadful.* Filled with dread; as in *R. of L.* 450, *Rich. III.* i. 1. 8, etc. See on i. 1. 65 above.

216. *It head.* Cf. *Temp.* ii. 1. 163: "of it own kind;" *Hen. V.* v. 2. 40: "in it own fertility;" *Lear*, i. 4. 236: "it 's had it head

bit off by it young," etc. This possessive *it* occurs fourteen times in the folio (not counting a doubtful case in *T. G. of V.* v. 2. 21), *it 's* nine times, and *its* only once (*M. for M.* i. 2. 4). Milton has *its* three times (*P. L.* i. 254, iv. 813, and *Hymn on Nativ.* 106). *Its* does not occur in the Bible of 1611, and the possessive *it* is found only in *Leviticus*, xxv. 5 ("its" in modern eds.).

217. *Like as.* Cf. *Sonn.* 60. 1: "Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore;" *T. and C.* i. 2. 7: "like as there were husbandry in war," etc.

226. *Arm'd, say you?* This refers to the ghost, not to Horatio and Marcellus as some have understood it.

230. *Beaver.* The movable front of the helmet. Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 1. 120: "their beavers down," etc. It is sometimes put for the helmet, as in 1 *Hen. IV.* iv. 1. 104: "with his beaver on," etc.

237. *Like.* Likely; as often. Cf. ii. 2. 361 below. See also *M. of V.* ii. 7. 49: "Is 't like that lead contains her?" etc.

238. *Tell.* Count. Cf. *Rich. III.* i. 4. 122: "while one would tell twenty," etc. The word is now obsolete in this sense, except in the phrases "all told" and "telling one's beads." Cf. *teller* = one who counts money or votes.

240. *No?* As Furness remarks, the anonymous suggestion that this belongs to Horatio, not to Hamlet, is very plausible. "It is eminently characteristic of the precise Horatio (e'en the justest man Hamlet had ever found) to draw a nice distinction between *grizzled* and *sable silvered.* He had been most exact in his estimate of the time the Ghost stayed, and he would be equally exact even as to the colour and texture of the beard."

248. *Tenable in your silence.* To be kept silent or secret. *Tenable* is used by S. only here.

251. *Loves.* See on i. 1. 173 above.

254. *Your loves.* Say rather your loves. Cf. 163 above.

256. *Doubt.* Suspect. Cf. *Cor.* iii. 1. 152, *Oth.* iii. 3. 19, etc.

258. *To men's eyes.* The folio omits the comma after *them;*

and, as Corson says, it makes as good sense to connect *to men's eyes* with *o'erwhelm* as with *rise*.

Scene III. — 3. *Convoy is assistant.* Conveyance is ready. Cf. *A. W.* iv. 4. 10, *Hen. V.* iv. 3. 37, etc.

5. *For.* As for, as regards. Cf. i. 2. 112 above and i. 5. 139 below.

6. *Fashion.* That is, a matter of form or courtesy. *A toy in blood* = a caprice, an impulsive fancy. Cf. *Oth.* i. 3. 269: "Light-wing'd toys Of feather'd Cupid." For *blood* (= passion) cf. iii. 2. 70 below. The word is often used of love as an animal passion.

7. *Primy.* Early, vernal; perhaps peculiar to this passage (Nares).

8. *Forward.* Premature, and therefore liable to early decay.

9. *Suppliance.* Gratification, pastime; used by S. only here.

10. *No more but so?* The early eds. have a period after *so*, which some critics prefer.

11. *Crescent.* Cf. *A. and C.* ii. 1. 10: "My powers are crescent."

12. *Thews.* Muscular powers; as in *J. C.* i. 3. 81, and 2 *Hen. IV.* iii. 2. 276. S. uses the word only three times. For *temple* applied to the body, cf. *R. of L.* 719, 1172, *Macb.* ii. 3. 73, *Cymb.* ii. 1. 69, iv. 2. 55, v. 5. 220, etc.

13. *The inward service*, etc. As the body grows, the duties of the indwelling soul increase. *Service* seems to be suggested by *temple*.

15. *Cautel.* Craft, deceit. Used only here and in *L. C.* 303; but we have *cautelous* (= false, deceitful) in *Cor.* iv. 1. 33 and *J. C.* ii. 1. 129. *Besmirch* is used literally in *Hen. V.* iv. 3. 110.

16. *The virtue of his will.* His virtuous intentions.

19. *Unvalued.* Of low birth, mean. In the only other instance in S. (*Rich. III.* i. 4. 27) it means invaluable. Cf. Marlowe, *Tamburlane*, i. 2: "loss unvalued" (that is, inestimable).

20. *Carve for himself.* For the figure cf. *Oth.* ii. 3. 173: —

> "He that stirs next to carve for his own rage
> Holds his soul light."

21. *Safety.* A trisyllable. The folio has "sanctity," and some read "sanity."

26. *Particular act and place.* The line of conduct prescribed by his rank.

30. *Credent.* Credulous. Cf. *L. C.* 279:—

> "Lending soft audience to my sweet design
> And credent soul to that strong-bonded oath
> That shall prefer and undertake my troth."

It means credible in *M. for M.* iv. 4. 29 and *W. T.* i. 2. 142.

32. *Unmaster'd.* Uncontrolled, unbridled; used by S. only here.

36. *Chariest.* Most scrupulous. So *chariness* = scrupulousness in *M. W.* ii. 1. 102.

38. *Scapes.* Not "'scapes," being used in prose by Bacon and others.

39. *Canker.* Canker-worm; as in *M. N. D.* ii. 2. 3, etc.

40. *Buttons.* Buds (Fr. *bouton*); the only instance of this sense in S.

42. *Blastments.* Blights; used by S. only here.

44. *Youth,* etc. "That is, the passions of youth revolt from the power of self-restraint."

46. *Good my brother.* Like "dear my lord," etc.

47. *Ungracious.* Graceless. Cf. *Rich. II.* ii. 3. 89, 1 *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 490, etc.

49. *Whiles.* Used by S. interchangeably with *while* and *whilst.* *Puffed* = bloated.

50. *Primrose.* Cf. *Macb.* ii. 3. 21: "the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire."

51. *Recks not his own rede.* Cares not for his own counsel. Cf. Spenser, *F. Q.* vi. 2. 30: "To whose wise read she hearkning," etc. So the verb *rede* or *read* = advise; as in *F. Q.* i. 1. 13:

"Therefore I read beware," etc. *Fear me not* = fear not for me. Cf. iii. 4. 7 and iv. 5. 105 below. See also *M. for M.* iv. 1. 70, *Much Ado*, iii. 1. 31, etc.

52. *I stay too long.* "Laertes seems to think that Ophelia's spirited reply is giving the conversation a needless and inconvenient turn; for that for sisters to lecture brothers is an inversion of the natural order of things" (Moberly).

53. *Double.* Laertes had already taken leave of his father.

56. *Sits.* Often used of the wind. Cf. *M. of V.* i. 1. 18, *Rich. II.* ii. 1. 265, *Hen. V.* ii. 2. 12, etc.

59. *Character.* Write, inscribe. S. accents the verb either on the first or the second syllable; the noun on the first, except in *Rich. III.* iii. 1. 81.

Dowden remarks on the passage: "The advice of Polonius is a cento of quotations from Lyly's *Euphues*.[1] Its significance must be looked for less in the matter than in the sententious manner. Polonius has been wise with the little wisdom of worldly prudence. He has been a master of indirect means of getting at the truth, 'windlasses and assays of bias.' In the shallow lore of life he has been learned. Of true wisdom he has never had a gleam. And what Shakespeare wishes to signify in his speech is that wisdom of Polonius's kind consists in a set of maxims; all such wisdom might be set down for the head-lines of copy-books. That is to say, his wisdom is not the outflow of a rich or deep nature, but the little, accumulated hoard of a long and superficial experience. This is

[1] Mr. W. L. Rushton, in his *Shakespeare's Euphuism*, pp. 44–47, places side by side the precepts of Polonius and Euphues. "*Pol.* Give thy thoughts no tongue. *Euph.* Be not lavish of thy tongue. *Pol.* Do not dull thy palm, etc. *Euph.* Every one that shaketh thee by the hand is not joined to thee in heart. *Pol.* Beware of entrance to a quarrel etc. *Euph.* Be not quarrelous for every light occasion. *Pol.* Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice. *Euph.* It shall be thrice better to hear what they say, than to speak what thou thinkest." Both Polonius and Euphues speak of the advice given as "these few precepts."

what the sententious manner signifies. And very rightly Shakespeare has put into Polonius' mouth the noble lines,

> 'To thine own self be true,
> And it must follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man.'

Yes; Polonius has got one great truth among his copy-book maxims, but it comes in as a little bit of hard, unvital wisdom like the rest. '*Dress well, don't lend or borrow money;* to thine own self be true.'"

60. *Unproportion'd.* Disorderly, unsuitable; used by S. only here.

61. *Vulgar.* The word denotes the extreme of *familiar*, or "free-and-easy" with everybody. Cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* iii. 2. 41 : —

> "So common-hackney'd in the eyes of men,
> So stale and cheap to vulgar company."

62. *And their adoption tried.* Their adoption having been tested by sufficient acquaintance.

63. *Grapple.* Cf. *Macb.* iii. 1. 106: "Grapples you to the heart and love of us."

64. *Do not dull*, etc. "Do not make thy palm callous by shaking every man by the hand" (Johnson).

65. *Comrade.* Accented on the last syllable, as in 1 *Hen. IV.* iv. 1. 96; on the first in *Lear*, ii. 4. 213. S. uses the word only three times.

69. *Censure.* Opinion; as often. Cf. *Macb.* v. 4. 14: "our just censures." See also i. 4. 35 and iii. 2. 28 below.

71. *Express'd in fancy.* Marked or singular in device, or, in modern slang, "loud."

74. *Are most select*, etc. A corrupt line. The 1st quarto reads: "Are of a most select and generall chiefe in that;" the 2d and 3d: "Or of a most select and generous, chiefe in that." The folio has "Are of a most select and generous cheff in that,"

which is followed (reading "chief") by some editors; *chief* being explained as "eminence, superiority," or as "the upper part of a heraldic shield." The reading in the text is due to Rowe, and is generally adopted. *Chief* = chiefly, especially.

77. *Husbandry.* Thrift, economy. Cf. *Macb.* ii. 1. 4: "There 's husbandry in heaven; Their candles are all out," etc.

81. *Season.* "Mature, ripen" (Schmidt); or "make more pleasant and acceptable." Cf. iii. 3. 86 below.

83. *Tend.* Attend, are waiting; as in iv. 3. 47 below. Cf. the transitive use in *Temp.* i. 2. 47, *Lear*, ii. 4. 266, etc.

86. *And you*, etc. That is, I will remember it till you give me leave to forget it.

90. *Bethought.* Thought of. Cf. *Per.* v. 1. 44: "'T is well bethought." The verb is often used reflectively, as in *M. of V.* i. 1. 31, *M. N. D.* iv. 1. 155, etc. *Marry* was originally a mode of swearing by the Virgin Mary.

94. *Put on me.* Told me (Schmidt); or possibly a little stronger than that, and = impressed upon me. Cf. *A. Y. L.* i. 2. 99, *M. for M.* ii. 2. 133, *T. N.* v. 1. 70, etc.

101. *Green.* Still used colloquially in this sense = inexperienced, unsophisticated. Cf. *V. and A.* 806, *W. T.* iii. 2. 182, *K. John*, ii. 1. 472, iii. 4. 145, etc. See also "greenly," iv. 5. 66 below.

102. *Unsifted.* Untried; used by S. only here. Cf. *Luke*, xxii. 31. *Circumstance* is used collectively; as in *R. of L.* 1703, etc.

106. *Tenders.* That is, *promises* to pay. Cf. *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 87 and *Sonn.* 83. 4.

109. *Tender me a fool.* Make me seem a fool (for not looking after you better).

110. *Importun'd.* Accent on the second syllable, as regularly in S. Cf. *A. and C.* iv. 15. 19: "I here importune death awhile, until;" *M. for M.* v. 1. 438: "Against all sense you do importune her," etc.

115. *Springes.* Snares. Cf. v. 2. 294 below and *W. T.* iv. 3.

36. *Woodcock* was proverbial for a simpleton. Cf. *T. of S.* i. 2. 161 : "O this woodcock, what an ass it is!" The bird was popularly supposed to have no brains. Cf. Ford, *Lover's Melancholy*, ii. 1 : "A headpiece — of woodcock without brains in it."

116. *Prodigal.* Used adverbially, like many adjectives in S.

119. *A-making.* Cf. ii. 2. 604 : "fall a-cursing ;" also *T. and C.* i. 3. 159 : "a-mending," etc. This old prepositional *a* is still used colloquially ; as in "going a-fishing," etc.

120. *Fire.* A dissyllable. Cf. *fear* in iii. 4. 7 below.

122. *Your entreatments.* The invitations you receive. S. uses the word nowhere else.

126. *In few.* In few words, in short. Cf. *Temp.* i. 2. 144, *Hen. V.* i. 2. 245, etc.

127. *Brokers.* Procurers, go-betweens. Cf. *K. John*, ii. 1. 568, *T. and C.* v. 10. 33, *L. C.* 173, etc.

128. *Investments.* Vesture, dress ; used by S. only here and in *2 Hen. IV.* iv. 1. 45 : "white investments."

129. *Implorators.* Implorers ; not found elsewhere in S.

130. *Bawds.* Substituted by Theobald for the "bonds" of the early eds. and generally adopted.

133. *Slander.* Disgrace, or, perhaps, misuse.

135. *Come your ways.* Used by S. oftener than *Come your way.* Cf. *A. Y. L.* i. 2. 221, ii. 3. 66, etc. So with *go your ways* (iii. 1. 129 below, *M. W.* i. 2. 1, iv. 1. 81, etc.).

Scene IV. — 1. *Shrewdly.* Sharply, keenly.

2. *Eager.* Sharp, biting (Fr. *aigre*). Cf. i. 5. 69 below.

8. *Rouse.* See on i. 2. 127 above.

9. *Wassail.* Drinking-bout, carousal. Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 318: "At wakes and wassails," etc.

Upspring. A wild German dance. Steevens quotes Chapman's *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany :* —

> "We Germans have no changes in our dances —
> An Almain and an up-spring, that is all."

According to Elze, the word is a translation of the German *Hüpfauf*, the last and wildest dance at the old German merry-makings. *Reels* is a verb with *upspring* for its object, as Schmidt and Furness explain it.

10. *Rhenish.* Cf. *M. of V.* i. 2. 104: "A deep glass of Rhenish wine;" *Id.* iii. 1. 44: "red wine and Rhenish." See also v. 1. 186 below.

11. *Kettle-drum.* Douce quotes Cleaveland, *Fuscara:* "As Danes carowse by kettle-drums."

12. *The triumph*, etc. His triumph as a drinker; said ironically.

15. *Manner.* Custom, fashion; with perhaps a reference to *manor.* Cf. the play on the words in *L. L. L.* i. 1. 207 fol.

16. *Honour'd in the breach.* Dyce quotes from an old play: "He keeps his promise best that breaks with hell."

17. *East and west.* As Johnson points out, these words modify *traduc'd*, not *revel.*

18. *Tax'd.* Censured. Cf. *A. Y. L.* ii. 7. 71: —

> "Why, who cries out on pride,
> That can therein tax any private party," etc.

19. *Clepe.* Call. Cf. *Mach.* iii. 1. 94, *L. L. L.* v. 1. 23, etc. On the Danish reputation for drunkenness, cf. *Oth.* ii. 2. 84: "Why, he drinks you, with facility, your Dane dead drunk." *With swinish phrase*, etc. = stain our name by calling us swine. *Addition* = title, as in *Mach.* i. 3. 106, etc.

21. *At height.* To the utmost. Cf. *Sonn.* 15. 9: "at height decrease," etc.

22. *The pith*, etc. The best part of our reputation. For *attribute* = reputation, cf. *T. and C.* ii. 3. 125 and *Per.* iv. 3. 18.

24. *Mole of nature.* Natural blemish.

25. *Wherein they are not guilty.* Cf. *R. of L.* 538: —

> "For marks descried in men's nativity
> Are nature's faults, not their own infamy."

26. *His.* Its; as often. See on i. 2. 216 above.

27. *Complexion.* Temperament, natural disposition. Cf. *M. of V.* iii. 1. 32 and v. 2. 101 below.

30. *Plausive.* Plausible, pleasing. Cf. *A. W.* i. 2. 53 and iv. 1. 29.

32. *Nature's livery*, etc. A defect either natural (cf. "mole of nature" above) or accidental. *Star* = a mark like a star. Cf. *Cymb.* v. 5. 364: "Upon his neck a mole, a sanguine star."

34. *Undergo.* Support, attain to. Cf. *M. for M.* i. 1. 24: "To undergo such ample grace and honour."

35. *Censure.* Opinion, judgment. See on i. 3. 69 above.

36. *The dram of eale*, etc. A corrupt passage, not satisfactorily mended by any of the countless attempts to do it. Furness fills six closely printed pages with a summary of these. Some are comparatively simple and plausible, while others are of the wildest and most preposterous sort. The general meaning of the passage is obvious from the preceding statement, of which it is evidently a figurative repetition. The idea is that of a little leaven of evil leavening the whole lump of "noble substance;" and it seems probable that "evil," or some word of the same sense ("ill," "vile," "base," etc., have been suggested) is disguised in *eale.* It is a significant fact that, in ii. 2. 617 below, the 2d quarto has "deale" for *devil.* Dyce says that *eale* itself is used in the western counties of England in the sense of "reproach;" and "*eale*, to reproach," is given in Halliwell and Wright's *Archaic Dict.* as a Devonshire word. *Of a doubt* has been changed to "often dout" (= do out, efface), "ever dout," "oft corrupt," etc. These are samples of the better sort of emendations.

38. *His.* Its; as in 26 above.

40. *A spirit of health.* A saved or good spirit.

43. *Questionable.* Inviting question. Cf. *unquestionable* = averse to conversation, in *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 393. S. uses the word only here.

45. *Royal Dane.* I follow Furness in adopting the punctuation proposed anonymously in a London journal in 1761. Many modern

eds., with the folio, join *Royal Dane* to *Father*, but the climax naturally ends with the latter word. Furness says: "Mr. Edwin Booth has informed me that his father always spoke the line thus and that he himself has always so spoken it."

47. *Canoniz'd.* The regular accent in S. Cf. *K. John*, iii. 1. 177, iii. 4. 52, *T. and C.* ii. 2. 202, etc. *Hearsed* = coffined. Cf. *M. of V.* iii. 1. 93: "Would she were hearsed at my foot."

52. *Complete.* Accented by S. on the first syllable when it precedes a noun accented on the first syllable; always *complète* in the predicate. Cf. *M. for M.* i. 3. 3, *L. L. L.* i. 1. 137, *Rich. III.* iv. 4. 189, etc., with *T. G. of V.* ii. 4. 73, *K. John*, ii. 1. 433, *Hen. VIII.* iii. 2. 49, etc. Other dissyllabic adjectives and participles are similarly varied in accent. Cf. *secure* in i. 5. 61 below.

53. *Glimpses.* That is, glimmering through the clouds.

54. *We.* The inflections of pronouns are often confused by S. See on i. 2. 190 above.

Fools of nature. Of whom nature makes fools. Cf. *R. and J.* iii. 1. 141: "O, I am fortune's fool!" See also *Lear*, iv. 6. 195, *Macb.* ii. 1. 44, etc.

55. *Disposition.* Constitution, nature; as in *Macb.* iii. 4. 112: "the disposition that I owe," etc.

56. *Reaches.* The plural is here used as in i. 1. 173.

59. *Impartment.* Communication; used by S. nowhere else.

61. *Removed.* Remote. See *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 360, etc.

73. *Deprive.* Take away; as in *R. of L.* 1186 and 1752. *Your sovereignty of reason* = the sovereignty of your reason, the command of your reason.

75. *Toys.* Freaks. Cf. *R. and J.* iv. 1. 119: "no inconstant toy," etc.

83. *The Nemean lion's.* We have this mythic beast again in *L. L. L.* iv. 1. 90, where *Nemean* is accented as here. *Nerve* = sinew or muscle. Cf. *Sonn.* 120. 4, *Temp.* i. 2. 484, *Macb.* iii. 4. 102, etc.

85. *Lets.* Hinders. Cf. *T. N.* v. 1. 256: "If nothing lets to

make us happy," etc. So the noun = hindrance, as in *Hen. V.* v. 2. 65, etc.

89. *Have after.* Let 's after him! Cf. *have with you* = I 'll go with you; as in *A. Y. L.* i. 2. 268, *Oth.* i. 2. 53, etc. So *have at it* (*W. T.* iv. 4. 302), *have at you* (v. 2. 309 below), *have to it* (*T. of S.* i. 1. 143), etc.

91. *Nay.* That is, let us not leave it to heaven, but look after him ourselves. *It* refers to *issue.*

SCENE V. — 6. *Bound.* The adjective = ready (Schmidt). The Ghost uses it as the participle of *bind.*

11. *To fast.* Cf. Chaucer, *Persones Tale:* "And moreover the misese [misease, or suffering] of helle shall be in defaute of mete and drink."

19. *An end.* The 1st quarto and most modern eds. have "on end."

20. *Porpentine.* Porcupine; the only name by which S. knows the animal. Cf. Ascham, *Toxophilus:* "nature geve example of shootinge first by the porpentine," etc. Topsell, in his *Hist. of Beasts,* 1607, has "porcuspine."

21. *Eternal blazon.* "This promulgation of the mysteries of eternity" (Moberly). Abbott (Gr. p. 16) thinks it is = *infernal* here: also in *J. C.* i. 2. 160 and *Oth.* iv. 2. 130. In these passages Schmidt defines it as "used to express extreme abhorrence." Cf. the use of *eternal* in the provincial dialects of the east of England, and in Yankee slang ("'tarnal").

29. *Haste.* For the transitive use, cf. *M. of V.* ii. 2. 121, *T. and C.* iv. 3. 5, *Cor.* v. 1. 74, etc.

33. *Lethe wharf.* Lethe's bank. Cf. *A. and C.* ii. 2. 218: "the adjacent wharfs" (that is, banks). For the allusion to *Lethe,* cf. *T. N.* iv. 1. 66, 2 *Hen. IV.* v 2. 72, *Rich. III.* iv. 4. 250, and *A. and C.* ii. 7. 114.

37. *Forged process.* A false account of the manner.

40. *O my prophetic soul!* "My very soul abhorred the murderer

even when I knew not his crime" (Moberly). Cf. i. 2. 255–258 above.

42. *Adulterate.* Used by S. oftener than *adulterous.* Cf. *R. of L.* 1645, *C. of E.* ii. 2. 142, *Rich. III.* iv. 4. 79, etc.

50. *Decline upon.* Sink down to. Cf. *T. and C.* iv. 5. 189: "Not letting it decline on the declin'd," etc. Wright quotes Tennyson, *Locksley Hall:*—

> "Having known me, to decline
> On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine."

52. *To.* Compared to. See on i. 2. 140 above.

58. *Soft.* Hold, stop; as often.

61. *Secure.* Careless, unsuspicious (Latin *securus*). Cf. *Rich. II.* v. 3. 13, *Hen. V.* iv. chor. 17, *T. and C.* ii. 2. 15, etc. S. accents the word on either syllable. See on *complete* in i. 4. 52 above.

62. *Hebenon.* The folio reading; the quartos have "Hebona." It has been supposed to refer to *henbane* or to *ebony*, the juice of which was believed to be poisonous; but Nicholson shows that the yew (sometimes called *Ebenus* and *Heben*) is probably meant.

63. *Bars.* It was a belief even among medical men in that day that poison might be thus introduced into the system. The eminent surgeon, Ambroise Paré, the contemporary of S., was suspected of having infused poison into the ear of Francis II. while dressing it.

68. *Vigour.* Power, activity. *Posset* = coagulate, curdle, as in curdling milk for a *posset.* See *Mach.* ii. 2. 6.

69. *Eager.* Sour (Fr. *aigre*). See on i. 4. 2 above.

71. *Instant.* Instantaneous. Cf. ii. 2. 528 below. It is used adverbially in 94 below.

72. *Lazar-like.* Like a leper. Cf. *Hen. V.* i. 1. 15, *T. and C.* ii. 3. 36, v. 1. 72, etc.

75. *Dispatch'd.* Deprived.

76. *Blossoms.* Cf. *W. T.* v. 2. 135: "in the blossoms of their fortune."

77. *Unhousel'd.* Not having received the eucharist (Old Eng-

lish *housel* or *husel*). Cf. Chaucer, *Persones Tale:* "And certes ones a yere at the lest way it is lawful to be houseled," etc. Spenser (*F. Q.* i. 12. 37) has "The housling fire" (sacramental or sacrificial fire). *Disappointed* = unappointed, unprepared; used by S. only here. *Unaneal'd* = not having received extreme unction. Nares quotes Sir Thomas More: "The extreme vnccion or anelynge."

80. *O horrible*, etc. This line is given to Hamlet by many of the editors, and others think that it probably belongs to him, as perhaps it does.

81. *Nature.* Natural feeling. Cf. *Temp.* v. 1. 76: "Expell'd remorse and nature," etc.

83. *Luxury.* Lust; its only meaning in S. Cf. *Hen. V.* iii. 5. 6, *M. W.* v. 5. 98, etc.

88. *Fare thee well.* Cf. i. 1. 40 above.

89. *Matin.* Matin hour, morning; used by S. only here. For the singular, cf. Milton, *L'All.* 114: "Ere the first cock his matin rings."

90. *Gins.* Not "'gins," as usually printed. *Uneffectual* = either "shining without heat" or "lost in the light of the morning."

97. *This distracted globe.* Here Hamlet puts his hand upon his head.

98. *Table.* Tablet. Cf. *T. G. of V.* ii. 7. 3:—

> "Who art the table wherein all my thoughts
> Are visibly character'd and engrav'd."

99. *Fond.* Foolish; as generally in S. *Records* as a noun is accented on either syllable by S.

100. *Saws.* Maxims, sayings. Cf. *A. Y. L.* ii. 7. 156: "wise saws;" *Id.* iii. 5. 82: "now I find thy saw of might;" *Lear*, ii. 2. 167: "the common saw," etc. *Pressures* = impressions. S. uses the word only here and in iii. 2. 25 below. He has *impressure* in the same sense in *A. Y. L.* iii. 5. 23, *T. N.* ii. 5. 103 (= seal), and *T. and C.* iv. 5. 131.

107. *Tables.* Memorandum-book. Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 289:

"his master's old tables, his note-book," etc. Cf. *table-book* in ii. 2. 136 below and *W. T.* iv. 4. 610.

110. *Word.* Watchword. Cf. *Rich. III.* v. 3. 349: "Our ancient word of courage, fair Saint George," etc.

115. *Hillo*, etc. A falconer's cry to recall his hawk. Hence the *come, bird, come.*

121. *Once.* Ever. Cf. *Macb.* iv. 3. 167, *Rich. II.* ii. 3. 91, etc.

127. *Circumstance.* Circumlocution. Cf. *M. of V.* i. 1. 154, *2 Hen. VI.* i. 1. 105, etc.

132. *Go pray.* A very common ellipsis with *go* and *come.* Cf. ii. 1. 101 below, etc.

136. *Saint Patrick.* "The patron saint of all blunders and confusions" (Moberly); but S. may not have had that in mind.

141. *Soldiers.* A trisyllable; as in *J. C.* iv. 1. 28: "But he 's a tried and valiant soldier;" and *Lear*, iv. 5. 3: "Your sister is the better soldier."

147. *Upon my sword.* The sword was often used in oaths because the hilt was in the form of a cross and sometimes had a cross inscribed upon it; and this swearing by the sword was, moreover, an old Scandinavian custom. Cf. *W. T.* ii. 3. 168, iii. 2. 125, *Rich. II.* i. 3. 179, *Hen. V.* ii. 1. 105, etc. *Already* refers to *in faith* above.

150. *Truepenny.* "Honest fellow" (Johnson). Forby gives it in his *Vocabulary of East Anglia* as = "hearty old fellow; stanch and trusty; true to his purpose or pledge."

163. *Pioner.* Pioneer. Cf. *Hen. V.* iii. 2. 92 and *Oth.* iii. 3. 146. In *R. of L.* 1380 it rhymes with "appear."

165. *As a stranger*, etc. Alluding to the duty of hospitality.

167. *Your.* Probably used colloquially, as in iii. 2. 3, 108, iv. 3. 22 fol., etc.

172. *Antic.* Fantastic, foolish. Cf. *R. and J.* i. 5. 58: "cover'd with an antic face;" *Id.* ii. 4. 29: "antic fantasticoes," etc.

174. *Encumber'd.* Folded thus.

177. *There be*, etc. In old English, besides the present tense

am, etc., there was this form *be* from the Anglo-Saxon *beon*. The second person singular was *beest*. S. often uses the first and third person plural *be*. Cf. iii. 2. 30: "there be players," etc.

178. *Giving-out.* Indication, intimation. Cf. *M. for M.* i. 4. 54, *Oth.* iv. 1. 131, etc. There is a grammatical irregularity in *never shall . . . to note.* Cf. *A. Y. L.* v. 4. 21: —

> "Keep your word, Phebe, that you 'll marry me,
> Or else, refusing me, to wed this shepherd."

186. *Friending.* Friendliness; used by S. only here. *Friend* is found as a verb in *M. for M.* iv. 2. 116, *Hen. V.* iv. 5. 17, *Hen. VIII.* i. 2. 140, etc.

187. *Lack.* Be wanting; as in *T. A.* iv. 2. 44. Cf. i. 4. 3 above.

189. *O cursed spite!* Cf. *C. of E.* ii. 2. 191: "O spite of spites!" *M. N. D.* i. 1. 138: "O spite!" *Id.* iii. 2. 145: "O spite! O hell!" 3 *Hen. VI.* v. 1. 18: "O unbid spite!" etc.

ACT II.

Scene I. — 3. *Shall.* Will; as not unfrequently.

5. *Of.* About, concerning. Cf. *Rich. II.* iii. 2. 186: "Inquire of him," etc.

7. *Danskers.* Danes; used by S. only here. Cf. Webster, *White Devil:* "Like a Dansk drummer." *Danske*, for Denmark, occurs often in Warner's *Albion's England.* The *me* is an expletive, as in ii. 2. 560 below.

8. *Keep.* Live, dwell. Cf. *M. for M.* iii. 1. 10: "this habitation where thou keep'st," etc.

10. *Encompassment and drift.* Circuitous course. *Encompassment* is used by S. only here.

11. *More nearer.* For the double comparative, cf. iii. 2. 296, iii. 4. 155, and v. 2. 127 below. The meaning is, "By these circuitous

inquiries you will get nearer to the point than you could by a direct question."

13. *Take you*, etc. Assume the appearance of having, etc.

22. *Slips.* Offences. Cf. *T. A.* ii. 3. 86: "these slips have made him noted long;" *Oth.* iv. 1. 9: "a venial slip," etc.

28. *Season.* See on i. 2. 192 above.

29. *Another scandal.* "A different and more scandalous failing,—habitual incontinency" (Malone), as distinguished from occasional *drabbing*.

31. *Breathe.* Utter, speak; as in 44 below. *Quaintly* = artfully, ingeniously. Cf. *T. G. of V.* iii. 1. 117: "a ladder quaintly made with cords," etc.

32. *Taints.* Cf. *Mach.* iv. 3. 124: "The taints and blames I laid upon myself," etc.

34. *Unreclaimed.* Untamed. So *reclaim* = tame, in *R. and J.* iv. 2. 47, etc. The passage means "A wildness in untamed blood to which all young men are liable" (Dyce).

36. *Ay.* Metrically a dissyllable.

38. *Fetch of warrant.* A warranted or justifiable artifice. Cf. *Lear*, ii. 4. 90: "Mere fetches."

40. *As 't were*, etc. As you might speak of an article slightly soiled.

42. *Converse.* Conversation. Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 745 and *Oth.* iii. 1. 40. S. uses the noun only three times, and with the accent as here. For *him* = *he*, see on i. 2. 190 and i. 4. 54 above.

43. *Prenominate.* Aforesaid. Cf. *T. and C.* iv. 5. 250: "to prenominate in nice conjecture." For the form of the participle here, see on i. 2. 20 above, and cf. *deject* in iii. 1. 159 below.

45. *In this consequence.* Thus following up your remark.

47. *Addition.* Title. See on i. 4. 20 above.

51. *Leave.* Leave off. Cf. *V. and A.* 715: "Where did I leave?" *T. of S.* iii. 1. 26: "Where left we last?" etc.

58. *O'ertook.* For the form, cf. *Mach.* iv. 1. 145: "never is o'ertook." For *rouse*, see on i. 2. 127 above.

64. *Of wisdom and of reach.* *Of* is used as in "thieves of

mercy," iv. 6. 19 below. The expression would then be = wise and shrewd. Some make *of* = by means of.

65. *Windlasses.* Windings, roundabout ways; used nowhere else by S. Cf. Golding, *Cæsar:* "bidding them fetche a windlasse a great waye about." *Assays of bias* = indirect ways; a figure taken from the game of bowls, in which the player sends the ball in a curved line instead of a straight one.

66. *Indirections.* Cf. *K. John,* iii. 1. 276. "Yet indirection thereby grows direct."

71. *In yourself.* Perhaps = in your own person, for yourself, as Johnson and Capell explain it. Caldecott says: "The temptations you feel, suspect in him." Wright thinks it may mean, "Conform your own conduct to his inclinations."

73. *Ply his music.* It is doubtful whether this is to be taken figuratively ("Let him go on, to what tune he pleases," as Clarke explains it) or literally (= attend to his music-lessons), as Schmidt supposes.

76. *God.* Changed in the folio to "Heaven," probably on account of the act of parliament in the time of James I. forbidding the use of the name of God on the stage.

77. *Closet.* Chamber. Cf. iii. 2. 325 below.

78. *Doublet.* The English lined coat which S. gives to the old Romans and modern foreigners. For *unbrac'd* = unfastened, cf. *J. C.* i. 3. 48 and ii. 1. 262.

80. *Ungarter'd.* Cf. the description of a lover in *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 398: "then your hose should be ungartered;" and see also *T. G. of V.* ii. 1. 78. *Down-gyved* = hanging like gyves or fetters.

82. *Purport.* Accented on the last syllable; used by S. nowhere else, either as noun or as verb.

84. *Horrors.* Abbott (Gr. 478) makes the word a trisyllable; but, as Furness suggests, "why not let Ophelia's strong emotion shudderingly fill the gap?"

90. *Perusal.* Study. Cf. iv. 7. 135: "peruse (that is, carefully examine) the foils."

91. *As.* As if. Cf. i. 2. 217 above.

95. *Bulk.* Explained by some as = breast. Cf. Baret, *Alvearie:* "The Bulke or breast of a man;" and *R. of L.* 467: "her heart. . . . Beating her bulk." Here, however, it may mean frame or body.

100. *Bended.* S. uses *bended* and *bent* interchangeably, both as past tense and as participle. Furness here quotes Miles, *Review of Hamlet:* "We are not permitted to see Hamlet in this ecstasy of love, but what a picture! How he must have loved her, that love should bring him to such a pass! — his knees knocking each other! — knees that had firmly followed a beckoning ghost! There is more than the love of forty thousand brothers in that hard grasp of the wrist, — in that long gaze at arm's length, — in the force that *might*, but *will* not, draw her nearer! And never a word from this king of words! His *first* great silence, — the *second* is death!"

102. *Ecstasy.* Madness. Cf. iii. 1. 164, iii. 4. 74, 136, 137, below.

103. *Fordoes.* Undoes, destroys. Cf. v. 1. 230 below.

112. *Quoted.* Noted, marked; formerly pronounced and often written "coted," which is the quarto reading here. Cf. *R. and J.* i. 4. 31, *T. and C.* iv. 5. 233, etc.

113. *Wrack.* Wreck, ruin. The word was spelt and pronounced *wrack* in the time of S. It rhymes with *alack* in *Per.* iv. prol. 12, and with *back* in *V. and A.* 558, *R. and L.* 841, 965, *Sonn.* 126. 5, and *Mach.* v. 5. 51. *Beshrew* was a mild form of imprecation. *Jealousy* = suspicion; as often.

114. *Proper.* Appropriate. Cf. *J. C.* i. 2. 41: "Conceptions only proper to myself," etc.

115. *Cast beyond ourselves.* "To forecast more than we ought for our own interests." Johnson says: "The vice of age is too much suspicion. Men long accustomed to the wiles of life *cast* commonly *beyond themselves*, let their cunning go farther than reason can attend it."

118. *Which, being kept close,* etc. "The king may be angry at

my telling of Hamlet's love; but more grief would come from hiding it" (Moberly).

SCENE II. — 2. *Moreover that.* Over and above that. On the other hand, *more above* in 126 below = moreover.

6. *Sith.* The quarto reading = *since*, which is derived from it; or, rather, from the full form, *sithence*, which occurs in *Cor.* iii. 1. 47 and *A. W.* i. 3. 124.

8. *Put him . . . from*, etc. Cf. iii. 1. 178 below: "puts him thus From fashion of himself." See also *R. and J.* iii. 5. 109, *T. of A.* iii. 4. 104, *Lear*, ii. 4. 293, etc.

11. *Of.* From. We still say "of late." Cf. *Acts*, viii. 11.

12. *Neighbour'd to.* Associated or intimate with. Cf. *Lear*, i. 1. 121, *Hen. V.* i. 1. 62, etc. *Humour* = disposition.

13. *Vouchsafe your rest.* Please to remain.

14. *Companies.* See on *loves*, i. 1. 173 above.

17. *Whether.* Monosyllabic, as often.

18. *Open'd.* Disclosed. Cf. *W. T.* iv. 4. 764, *Hen. V.* i. 1. 78, etc.

22. *Gentry.* Courtesy; as in v. 2. 112 below. It is = gentle birth in *R. of L.* 569, *Cor.* iii. 1. 144, etc.

23. *Expend your time.* Cf. *Oth.* i. 3. 391: "If I would time expend with such a snipe."

24. *Supply and profit.* "Aid and furtherance."

30. *Bent.* Endeavour, straining; a metaphor from the bending of a bow. Cf. iii. 2. 379 below; also *Much Ado*, ii. 3. 232 and *T. N.* ii. 4. 38.

38. *Heavens.* The plural is often thus used by S. Cf. *Temp.* i. 2. 175: "Heavens thank you for 't!" *Id.* ii. 1. 324: "Heavens keep him from these beasts!" (see also iii. 1. 75 and iii. 3. 20); *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 447: "Heavens shield Lysander," etc.

42. *Still.* Ever. See on i. 1. 122 above.

43. *Assure you.* Be assured. Cf. *Lear*, ii. 1. 106: "Nor I, assure thee, Regan;" *Oth.* iii. 3. 20: "assure thee, If I do vow a friendship," etc.

52. *Fruit.* The dessert.

56. *Doubt.* Suspect. See on i. 2. 256 above, and cf. iii. 1. 170 below: "I do doubt the hatch," etc. *The main* = the main point or cause; as in 2 *Hen. VI.* i. 1. 208: "look unto the main."

60. *Desires.* Good wishes.

61. *First.* That is, first audience or opening of our business.

67. *Borne in hand.* Deceived, deluded. Cf. *T. of S.* iv. 2. 3, *Cymb.* v. 5. 43, etc. For the ellipsis of the subject in *sends*, cf. iii. 1. 8 below.

71. *Assay.* Proof, trial. Cf. iii. 3. 69 below.

79. *Such regards*, etc. Such conditions as are safe and allowable.

80. *Likes.* Pleases. Cf. *Hen. V.* iii. prol. 32: "The offer likes not;" *Id.* iv. 3. 77: "which likes me better," etc.

81. *Our more consider'd time.* When we have more time for considering.

83. *Well-took.* S. also uses *taken* (i. 2. 14 above) and *ta'en* (i. 3. 106 above).

86. *Expostulate.* Discuss. Cf. Capt. John Smith's book on *Virginia*: "How these isles came by the name of the Bermudas . . . I will not expostulate."

90. *Wit.* Wisdom; as often in S.

95. *More matter*, etc. More matter with less mannerism.

96. *Art.* "The Queen uses *art* in reference to Polonius's stilted style; he uses it as opposed to truth and nature" (Delius).

98. *Figure.* "A figure in rhetoric," as Touchstone says (*A. Y. L.* v. i. 45). Cf. *L. L. L.* i. 2. 58.

105. *Perpend.* Ponder, consider; a word used only by Pistol, Polonius, and the clowns. Cf. *M. W.* i. 1. 119, *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 09, etc.

113. *In.* Into. Cf. *T. G. of V.* iii. 1. 250.

116–119. *Doubt.* In the first three lines *doubt* = have a misgiving, have a half-belief; in the fourth line = disbelieve.

121. *Reckon.* Count, number; or perhaps = express in numbers or verse, as Delius explains it.

123. *Whilst this machine is to him.* Whilst this body is his;

"the affected language of euphuism." S. uses *machine* nowhere else.

126. *More above.* Moreover. See on 2 above.

133. *As I perceiv'd it.* "There is much humour in the old man's inveterate foible for omniscience. He absurdly imagines that he had discerned for himself all the steps of Hamlet's love and madness; while of the former he had been unaware till warned by some friends, and the latter did not exist at all" (Moberly).

136. *If I had play'd*, etc. If I had just kept the matter to myself. See on *tables*, i. 5. 107 above.

137. *Or given*, etc. Or had connived at it.

139. *Round.* Directly, without ceremony. Cf. iii. 1. 187 and iii. 4. 5 below. As Caldecott remarks, it has "the reverse of its literal meaning, that is, *without* circuity."

141. *Out of thy star.* "Out of thy sphere" (2d folio); above thee in fortune. Cf. *T. N.* ii. 5. 156: "In my stars I am above thee."

145. *Took the fruits*, etc. Profited by my advice.

148. *Watch.* A sleepless state. Cf. *Cymb.* iii. 4. 43: "To lie in watch there and to think on him."

149. *Lightness.* Lightheadedness. Cf. *C. of E.* v. 1. 72 and *Oth.* iv. 1. 280.

159. *The centre.* That is, of the earth. Cf. *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 54:

> "I 'll believe as soon
> The whole earth may be bor'd, and that the moon
> May through the centre creep," etc.

In *W. T.* ii. 1. 102 and *T. and C.* i. 3. 85 *centre* = the earth, the centre of the Ptolemaic universe.

160. *Four.* As Malone notes, "four hours together," "two hours together," etc., were common phrases. Cf. *Lear*, i. 2. 170, *W. T.* v. 2. 148, etc. So in Webster, *Duchess of Malfi*: "She will muse four hours together."

162. *Loose.* He had forbidden her to have any intercourse with Hamlet.

163. *Arras.* Tapestry hangings; so called from Arras, where they were largely made.

168. *Wretch.* Sometimes used as a term of endearment, mingled with pity. Cf. *R. and J.* i. 3. 44: "The pretty wretch left crying;" *Oth.* iii. 3. 90: "Excellent wretch!" etc.

170. *Board.* Accost, address; as often. Cf. *T. N.* i. 3. 60, *M. W.* ii. 1. 92, *L. L. L.* ii. 1. 218, etc. *Presently* = immediately; its usual meaning in S. Cf. 609 below; also iii. 2. 49, 369, v. 2. 400, etc.

172. *God-a-mercy.* God have mercy. Cf. iv. 5. 182 below.

182. *A good kissing carrion.* The reading of all the early eds., as of most editors. *Good kissing* is = good *for* kissing, or *to be* kissed, by the sun.

185. *Conception*, etc. "Understanding is a blessing; but if you leave your daughter unrestrained, she will understand what you will not like" (Moberly). There is probably a play on *conception*, as in *Lear*, i. 1. 12.

188. *How say you by that?* What do you say of that? Cf. *M. of V.* i. 2. 58: "How say you by the French lord?"

191. *I suffered*, etc. "It *may* have been so; but one rather suspects that Polonius's love-reminiscences are like those of Touchstone in *A. Y. L.* ii. 4" (Moberly).

195. *Matter.* Subject-matter. Cf. 95 above. "Hamlet purposely misunderstands the word to mean 'cause of dispute,' as in *T. N.* iii. 4. 172" (Wright).

196. *Who.* Whom. See on i. 2. 190 above. Cf. *Mach.* iii. 4. 42, *Oth.* i. 2. 52, etc.

205. *For you yourself*, etc. The natural reason would have been "For some time I shall be as old as you are now," but Hamlet turns it to the opposite.

209. *There is method in 't.* Cf. *M. for M.* v. 1. 60:—

> "If she be mad — as I believe no other —
> Her madness hath the oddest frame of sense,

Such a dependency of thing on thing,
As e'er I heard in madness."

213. *Pregnant.* Ready, apt, clever. Cf. iii. 2. 62 below. So *pregnancy* = cleverness in 2 *Hen. IV.* i. 2. 192.

233. *Indifferent.* Middling, average. Cf. *T. G. of V.* iii. 2. 44, etc.

251. *Confines.* Places of confinement. See on i. 1. 155 above.

255. *Thinking makes it so.* Cf. Lovelace: —

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
These for a hermitage."

268. *Then are our beggars,* etc. "If ambition is the shadow of pomp, and pomp the shadow of a man, then the only true substantial men are beggars, who are stript of all pomp and all ambition." *Outstretch'd* = strained, exaggerated; "strutting stage heroes" (Delius).

270. *Fay.* Faith. Cf. *T. of S.* ind. 2. 83, etc.

276. *Beaten.* Familiar, unceremonious. For *make,* see on i. 2. 164 above.

282. *Dear a halfpenny.* Cf. *A. Y. L.* ii. 3. 74: "too late a week."

289. *Modesties.* See on *loves,* i. 1. 173.

295. *Consonancy,* etc. Cf. 11 above.

297. *A better proposer.* A more eloquent speaker. Cf. *propose* = speak, in *Much Ado,* iii. 1. 3, *Oth.* i. 1. 25, etc.

298. *Even.* Plain, honest. Cf. *Hen. V.* iv. 8. 114.

301. *Of you.* Upon you. Cf. *Lear,* i. 5. 22.

305. *Prevent your discovery.* Anticipate your disclosure. Cf. *J. C.* v. 1. 105: "to prevent The time of life," etc.

311. *Brave.* Beautiful, grand. Cf. *Sonn.* 12. 2: "And see the brave day sunk in hideous night," etc. For *majestical,* see on i. 1. 143.

312. *Fretted.* Embossed, adorned. Cf. *Cymb.* ii. 4. 88: —

" The roof o' the chamber
With golden cherubins is fretted; "

Milton, *P. L.* i. 717: "The roof was fretted gold," etc.

314. *A congregation of vapours.* "Veiling the true sunlight. Cf. *Sonn.* 33. 1–8" (Moberly).

316. *Express.* Exact. Cf. *Hebrews*, i. 3.

320. *Quintessence.* The fifth or highest essence of the alchemists. S. uses the word only here and in *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 147.

328. *Lenten.* Meagre, poor. Cf. *T. N.* i. 5. 9: "A good lenten answer."

329. *Coted.* Passed by, outstripped, "o'er-raught" (iii. 1. 17 below). Cf. *The Return from Parnassus*, 1606: "we presently coted and outstript them." It is not simply to come up with (as some explain it), but to go beyond. Thus, in this case, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, having "coted" the players, reach the palace first and tell Hamlet that they are coming.

334. *Humorous man.* "The actor who personated the fantastic characters . . . for the most part represented as capricious and quarrelsome" (Staunton).

336. *Tickle o' the sere.* This expression, long a stumbling-block to the critics, appears to have been correctly explained by Mr. Nicholson in *Notes and Queries*, July 22, 1871: "The *sere*, or, as it is now spelt, *sear* (or *scear*), of a gun-lock is the bar or balance-lever interposed between the trigger on the one side, and the tumbler and other mechanism on the other, and is so called from its acting the part of a *serre*, or talon, in gripping the mechanism and preventing its action. . . . Now, if the lock be so made on purpose, or be worn, or be faulty in construction, this *sear*, or grip, may be so *tickle* or ticklish in its adjustment that a slight touch or even jar may displace it, and then of course the gun goes off. Hence, 'light' or 'tickle of the sear' (equivalent to, like a hair-trigger), applied metaphorically, means that which can be started into action at a mere touch, or on the slightest provocation, or on what ought to be no provocation at all." *Lungs tickle o' the sere*,

then, are lungs easily moved to laughter. For *tickle* = ticklish, cf. *M. for M.* i. 2. 177: "thy head stands so tickle on thy shoulders that a milk-maid, if she be in love, may sigh it off;" and 2 *Hen. VI.* i. 1. 216:—

"the state of Normandy
Stands on a tickle point."

On the passage, cf. *Temp.* ii. 1. 174: "who are of such sensible [that is, sensitive] and nimble lungs that they always use to laugh at nothing."

The lady, etc. The lady shall mar the measure rather than not express herself freely (Henderson); or, if through delicacy she omit anything, the lameness of the metre will show it (Seymour).

341. *Their residence.* Their remaining in the city.

344. *Inhibition.* Prohibition. Some refer this to the limiting of public theatrical performances to two theatres, the Globe and the Fortune, in 1600 and 1601. The players, by a *late innovation*, were *inhibited*, or forbidden to act in or near *the city*, and therefore *travelled* or *strolled*, into the country. The *innovation*, however, may have been the license given Jan. 30, 1603–4, to the Children of the Queen's Revels to play at Blackfriars Theatre and other convenient places. The popularity of the children may well have driven the older actors into the country, and so have operated as an *inhibition*, though no formal inhibition was issued. For other explanations of the passage, see Furness, vol. i. pp. 162–164.

351. *Aery.* A brood of nestlings (literally, an eagle's or hawk's nest). Cf. *K. John*, v. 2. 149, *Rich. III.* i. 3. 264, 270. *Eyases* = unfledged hawks, nestlings.

352. *Top of question.* At the top of their voices. Cf. *question* = speech, talk; as in *Macb.* iii. 4. 118, *A. Y. L.* iii. 4. 39, v. 4, 167, etc. See also iii. 1. 13 below. *Tyrannically* = vehemently, extravagantly; probably alluding to what Bottom calls "a tyrant's vein," or "a part to make all split." Moberly paraphrases the whole passage thus: "What brings down the professional actors is the competition of a nest of young hawks (the boys of the Chapel

Royal, etc.) who carry on the whole dialogue without modulation at the top of their voices, get absurdly applauded for it, and make such a noise on the common stage, that true dramatists, whose wit is as strong and keen as a rapier, are afraid to encounter these chits, who fight, as it were, with a goose-quill."

358. *Escoted.* Paid; used by S. nowhere else. Dyce quotes Cotgrave, *Fr. Dict.*: "*Escotter.* Euery one to pay his shot," etc.

Will they pursue, etc. "Will they follow the profession of players no longer than they can keep the voices of boys?" (Johnson). For *quality* = profession, cf. 444 below; also *Hen. V.* iii. 6. 146: "What is thy name? I know thy quality."

363. *Succession.* Futurity. Cf. *C. of E.* iii. 1. 105: "For slander lives upon succession" (that is, feeds on futurity, makes all that is to come its prey).

364. *To-do.* Equivalent to *ado.*

365. *Tarre.* Set on (to fight); used literally of dogs. Cf. *K. John*, iv. 1. 117:—

> "And like a dog that is compell'd to fight,
> Snatch at his master that doth tarre him on;"

and *T. and C.* i. 3. 392:—

> "Two curs shall tame each other; pride alone
> Must tarre the mastiffs on, as 't were their bone."

367. *Argument.* The plot of the play; as in iii. 2. 226 below. Cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 310: "the argument shall be thy running away," etc.

372. *Carry it away.* Carry off the palm, gain the day.

373. *Hercules.* Perhaps, as Steevens suggests, an allusion to the Globe Theatre, the sign of which was Hercules carrying the globe.

375. *It is not very strange*, etc. "I do not wonder that the new players have so suddenly risen to reputation; my uncle supplies

another example of the facility with which honour is conferred on new claimants" (Johnson).

376. *Mows.* Grimaces. Cf. *Temp.* iv. 1. 47 : "with mop and mow;" *Cymb.* i. 6. 41 : "Contemn with mows." We have the word as a verb in *Temp.* ii. 2. 9 and *Lear*, iv. 1. 64.

378. *In little.* In miniature. Cf. *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 148: "Heaven would in little show;" and *L. C.* 90: "in little drawn."

379. *'Sblood.* An abbreviation of "God's blood," a mode of swearing by the eucharist. Cf. iii. 2. 363 below. In the folio it is generally omitted (as here) or replaced by other words (as "I' faith" in *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 488).

383. *Appurtenance.* Proper accompaniment ; used by S. only here.

384. *Comply with you*, etc. Use ceremony with you in this manner. Cf. v. 2. 192 below.

385. *Extent.* Behaviour, deportment. Cf. *T. N.* iv. 1. 57 : "this uncivil and unjust extent."

390. *North-north-west.* Jocosely for "at times," or "when the whim takes me."

391. *Handsaw.* The word in this proverb is probably a corruption of *hernshaw*, a heron; but no other instances of the expression have been found, except as quotations from S.

392. *Well be with you.* Cf. *A. W.* i. 1. 190: "God send him well!" See also 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 4. 19. Wright quotes *Psalms*, cxxviii. 2 [Prayer-book version]: "Well is thee."

396. *Happily.* Haply. See on i. 1. 134 above.

399. *You are right*, etc. This is said merely that Polonius may not suspect what they have been talking about.

405. *Buz, buz!* Blackstone says that *buz* was an interjection used at Oxford when one began a story already well known.

407. *Then came*, etc. Probably a line from an old ballad (Johnson).

411. *Individable.* This probably refers to dramas in which the unity of place was observed, *poem unlimited* to those that disre-

garded such restrictions. Schmidt makes it = "not to be distinguished by a particular appellation (that is, not to be called tragedy, comedy, etc.)," and *unlimited* = undefined.

412. The plays of *Seneca* and *Plautus* were often acted at the Universities, and had been partially translated into English.

413. *The law of writ and liberty.* Adhering to the text or extemporizing. Caldecott says: "For the observance of the rules of the drama, while they take such liberties as are allowable, they are the only men."

415. *O Jephthah,* etc. The old song from which Hamlet quotes may be found in Percy's *Reliques.* The old copies of it vary somewhat. One form begins thus: —

> "I read that many years agoe,
> When Jepha Judge of Israel,
> Had one fair Daughter and no more,
> whom he loved so passing well.
> And as by lot God wot,
> It came to passe most like it was,
> Great warrs there thould be,
> and who should be the chiefe, but he, but he."

431. *Row.* Properly = line, but perhaps here = stanza.

432. *Abridgments come.* The meaning seems to be that the players by coming shorten his talk.

435. *Valanced.* Fringed with a beard. We find the noun *valance* in *T. of S.* ii. 1. 356.

436. *My young lady.* In the time of S. female parts were played by boys or young men.

439. *Chopine.* A kind of high shoe. Coryat in his *Crudities,* 1611, describes it as "a thing made of wood and covered with leather of sundry colours, some with white, some redde, some yellow." He adds: "It is called a chapiney, which they wear under their shoes . . . There are many of these chapineys of a great height, even half a yard high." Furness says: "At a Jewish wedding

in Jerusalem at which I was present, in 1856, the young bride, aged twelve, wore chopines at least ten inches high."

440. *Cracked within the ring.* There was a ring on the coin within which the sovereign's head was placed; if the crack extended from the edge beyond this ring, the coin was no longer current. The figure refers to the change of voice which would unfit the youth for female parts.

442. *Like French falconers.* According to some critics this is meant to be contemptuous; but Tollet quotes Sir Thomas Browne, who says that "the French seem to have been the first and noblest falconers in the western part of Europe."

443. *Straight.* Straightway; as in iii. 4. 1 below, etc. For *quality* see on 359 above.

449. *Caviare.* A Russian condiment made from the roe of the sturgeon; at that time a new and fashionable delicacy, not obtained nor relished by the vulgar, and therefore used by S. to signify anything above their comprehension. It is often mentioned by contemporaneous writers. For *the general* = people in general, the public, cf. *J. C.* ii. 1. 12: "But for the general."

450. *Cried in the top of mine.* "Were higher than mine" (Johnson). In hunting, a dog is said to *overtop* "when he gives more tongue than the rest," and to this Hamlet probably refers here. The phrase is then = proclaimed with a tone of authority that my voice could not give.

453. *No sallets*, etc. "Nothing that gave a relish to the lines as salads do to meat;" or perhaps "spicy improprieties," as Dowden explains it. Cf. *A. W.* iv. 5. 18: "She was the sweet marjoram of the salad" ("sallet" in the folio). See also 2 *Hen. VI.* iv. 10. 9 fol. where there is a play upon *sallet* = salad and *sallet* = a kind of helmet.

455. *Indict.* Accuse; as in *Oth.* iii. 4. 154, the only other instance of the word in S.

457. *Handsome* denotes genuine, natural beauty; *fine*, artificial, laboured beauty (Delius).

459. *Thereabout.* Possibly a noun, as some make it; but *thereabout of it* seems to be merely = there. We might now say colloquially: "I liked that speech, — there especially where," etc.

463. *The rugged Pyrrhus*, etc. Whether this speech was meant to be admired or to be laughed at has been much disputed. Pope thought it "purely ironical;" Warburton, Ritson, Caldecott, Coleridge, and others have taken the opposite ground. What Hamlet has said just before shows that the latter are right. Coleridge says: "The fancy that a burlesque was intended sinks below criticism; the lines, as epic narrative, are superb." Dowden remarks: "This tale of Æneas to Dido is made to stand out from the general movement of the play by being written in the tragic style of Shakespeare's early contemporaries;" but "without any intention of burlesque."

The *Hyrcanian beast* is the tiger. Cf. *Macb.* iii. 4. 101: "the Hyrcan tiger;" etc.

470. *Gules.* Red; an heraldic term. S. uses it again in *T. of A.* iv. 3. 59: "With man's blood paint the ground, gules, gules." Cf. Keats, *St. Agnes' Eve*:—

> "Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
> And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast."

Trick'd. Adorned. Cf. *Hen. V.* iii. 6. 80: "which they trick up with new-tuned oaths;" Milton, *Il Pens.* 123: "Not trick'd and frounc'd as she was wont," etc. In heraldry, a *trick* is "a delineation of arms in which the colours are distinguished by their technical marks, without any colour being laid on" (Dyce).

472. *Impasted.* Made into a paste; a word used by S. nowhere else.

475. *O'ersized.* Covered as with "size," or glue. For the form of *coagulate*, cf. *adulterate*, i. 5. 42 above.

476. *Eyes like carbuncles.* Cf. Milton, *P. L.* ix. 500: "and carbuncle his eyes."

485. *Drives.* Followed by *upon* in *T. A.* ii. 3. 64:—

"and the hounds
Should drive upon thy new-transformed limbs."

491. *Declining.* Cf. *T. and C.* iv. 5. 189: —

"When thou hast hung thy advanc'd sword i' the air,
Not letting it decline on the declin'd."

493. *A painted tyrant.* Malone thinks that S. had in mind "the tremendous personages often represented in old tapestry, whose uplifted swords stick in the air, and do nothing." Delius cites *Mach.* v. 8. 25–27.

494. *Neutral.* Taking no part in the contest. *Master* = that on which his will is to be exercised.

496. *Against.* Cf. i. 1. 158 above, and iii. 4. 50 below.

497. *Rack.* Mass of cloud, especially in motion. Cf. *Sonn.* 33. 6:

"Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face," etc.

499. *Hush.* Not elsewhere used as an adjective by S.

500. *Region.* Originally a division of the sky marked out by the Roman augurs. S. uses it several times for the air. Cf. 596 below: "the region kites." See also *Sonn.* 33. 12 and *Ps. and J.* ii. 2. 21.

501. *A-work.* Cf. *R. of L.* 1496: "So Lucrece, set a-work." See also *T. and C.* v. 10. 38, *Lear*, iii. 5. 8, etc.

503. *Proof.* A technical term for the resisting power of armour. For *eterne*, cf. *Mach.* iii. 2. 38.

504. *Remorse.* Pity; as often.

507. *Synod.* Used by S. seven times, and in all but one for an assembly of the gods.

513. *Jig.* The word sometimes meant a facetious ballad. Cf. *jig-maker*, iii. 2. 117 below.

515. *Mobled.* The word means veiled or *muffled*, of which it may be a corruption. Farmer quotes Shirley, *Gent. of Venice:* "The moon does mobble up herself;" and Holt White adds from

Ogilby's *Fables:* "Mobbled nine days in my considering cap." *Mabled* is another form of the word. Nares cites Sandys, *Travels:* "Their heads and faces are mabled in fine linen, that no more is seen of them than their eyes."

517. *That 's good.* "Polonius praises the epithet to make up for his blunder in objecting to the length" (Moberly).

519. *Bisson rheum.* Blinding tears. We find *bisson* = purblind, in *Cor.* ii. 1. 70, and some modern eds. give it in *Cor.* iii. 1. 131. For *rheum* = tears, cf. *Much Ado*, v. 2. 85, *K. John*, iii. 1. 22, iv. 1. 33, iv. 3. 108, etc.

521. *O'erteemed.* Exhausted by child-bearing.

527. *Mincing.* Cutting in pieces. Cf. *T. of A.* iv. 3. 122: "And mince it [the babe] sans remorse."

528. *Instant.* Cf. i. 5. 71 above.

530. *Milch.* Milk-giving; a metaphor for tearful. For the literal use of the word, see *M. W.* iv. 4. 33, *T. of S.* ii. 1. 359, etc.

531. *Passion.* Sorrow or compassion. Cf. 531 and 567 below. See also *L. L. L.* v. 2. 118, *M. N. D.* v. 1. 293, 321, etc.

532. *Whether.* The early eds. have "where," and some modern ones print "whe'r" or "whêr." See on 17 above. Such contractions as *in 's* (*in his*), *on 's* (*on us*), etc., are often found in S.

537. *Bestowed.* Lodged, taken care of. Cf. iii. 4. 174 and iv. 3. 12 below. It is used reflexively (= hide) in iii. 1. 33 and 44 below.

539. *You were better.* Originally, it were better *for you*, the *you* being a dative; but it came to be regarded as a nominative. So we find "I were better" (*2 Hen. IV.* i. 2. 245), "she were better" (*T. N.* i. 2. 27), etc.

543. *Bodykins.* A diminutive of *body.* The reference was originally to the sacramental bread. Cf. *M. W.* ii. 3. 46, etc.

544. *Scape.* See on i. 3. 38 above.

555. *Some dozen or sixteen lines.* Many attempts have been made to find these added lines in the play (iii. 2 below), but it is quite certain that Hamlet writes no speech at all. The poet

simply *represents* him as doing so in order to adapt the old play to his purpose. As Furness remarks, "it would tax the credulity of an audience too severely to represent the possibility of Hamlet's finding an old play exactly fitted to Claudius's crime, not only in the plot, but in all the accessaries, even to a single speech which should tent the criminal to the very quick. . . . The discussion, therefore, that has arisen over these 'dozen or sixteen lines' is a tribute to Shakespeare's consummate art."

564. *Alone.* "The eagerness shown by Hamlet to be left in peace by himself appears to be a main evidence of his merely acting a part and *assuming* madness; he longs to get rid of the presence of persons before whom he has resolved to wear a show of insanity. Alone, he is collected, coherent, full of introspection. That he is neither dispassionate nor cool appears to be the result of his unhappy source of thought, not the result of derangement; he is morally afflicted, not mentally affected" (Clarke).

565. *Peasant slave.* Furnivall has shown (*Notes and Queries* for Apr. 12 and May 3, 1873) that S. might possibly have seen in the flesh some of the bondmen or *peasant slaves* of England.

569. *Her working.* Wright says: "*Soul* when personified is feminine in S." Cf., however, *Rich. II.* v. 5. 6:—

> "My brain I 'll prove the female to my soul,
> My soul the father."

Milton also personifies the soul as feminine. See *Il Pens.* 92, *Comus*, 454 fol., *P. L.* v. 486, etc. S. does not elsewhere use *wan*.

570. *Aspect.* Always accented on the last syllable by S.

571. *Function.* Action; "the whole energies of soul and body" (Caldecott).

572. *Conceit.* Conception (that is, of the character).

576. *Cue.* Still used as a stage term. For its literal use, cf. *M. W.* iii. 3. 39. *M. N. D.* iii. 1. 78, 102, etc.; and for the figurative, as here, *Hen. V.* iii. 6. 130, *Oth.* i. 2. 83, etc.

579. *Free.* Free from guilt, innocent. Cf. iii. 2. 236 below.

580. *Amaze.* Confuse, confound; as in *K. John*, iv. 2. 137, etc.

583. *Muddy-mettled.* Heavy, irresolute. *Peak* is literally = grow lean, pine, as in *Mach.* i. 3. 23; figuratively = sneak, play a contemptible part; as here and in *M. W.* iii. 5. 71.

584. *John-a-Dreams.* That is, *John of Dreams*, or *John the Dreamer* = a dreamy, idle fellow. Cf. *Jack-a-lent* (a puppet thrown at during Lent) in *M. W.* iii. 3. 27, v. 5. 134, *Jack-a-Lanthorn* (the ignis fatuus), and similar forms. Cf. Armin, *Nest of Ninnies*, 1608: "His name is John, indeede, saies the cinnick; but neither John a nods nor John a dreames, yet either as you take it." *Unpregnant of* = not quickened by, not inspired with. Cf. *M.* for *M.* iv. 4. 23: "unpregnant and dull to all proceedings."

586. *Property.* Some critics doubt whether the word can have its ordinary modern sense here; but I agree with Furness, who says: "I suppose it refers to his crown, his wife, everything, in short, which he might be said to be possessed of, except his life." He compares *M. W.* iii. 4. 10, to which may be added *J. C.* iv. 1. 40.

587. *Defeat.* Ruin, destruction; as in v. 2. 58 below. See also *Hen. V.* i. 2. 107: "Making defeat on the full power of France." Steevens quotes Chapman, *Revenge for Honour*: —

> "That he might meantime make a sure defeat
> On our good aged father's life."

591. *Me.* See on ii. 1. 7 above.

593. *'Swounds.* A contraction of "God's wounds;" used again in v. 1. 283 below. *Zounds* is a corruption of the same oath, and is either omitted or changed in the folio. See on ii. 1. 76 and on 379 above.

594. *Pigeon-liver'd.* It was supposed that pigeons and doves owed their gentleness of disposition to the absence of gall. Cf. Drayton, *Eclogue* ix.: —

> "A Milk-white Doue upon her hand shee brought,
> So tame 't would goe returning at her call,

About whose Necke was in a Choller wrought
'Only like me my Mistress hath no gall.'"

595. *To make*, etc. To make me feel the bitterness of oppression.

596. *Region.* See on 500 above.

598. *Kindless.* Unnatural. So *kindly* = natural; as in *A. Y. L.* ii. 3. 53, *Much Ado*, iv. 1. 75, etc.

604. *A-cursing.* See on i. 3. 119 above.

606. *About.* "Wits, to your work!" (Dowden). Steevens quotes Heywood, *Iron Age:*—

"My brain about again! for thou hast found
New projects now to work on.

607–611. *Guilty creatures*, etc. Todd quotes *A Warning for Faire Women*, 1599:—

"Ile tell you, sir, one more to quite [requite] your tale.
A woman that had made away her husband,
And sitting to behold a tragedy
At Linne a towne in Norffolke,
Acted by players travelling that way,
Wherein a woman that had murtherd hers
Was ever haunted with her husbands ghost:
The passion written by a feeling pen,
And acted by a good tragedian,
She was so mooved with the sight thereof,
As she cryed out, the play was made by her,
And openly confesst her husbands murder."

Cf. Massinger, *Roman Actor*, ii. 1:—

"I once observed,
In a tragedy of ours, in which a murder
Was acted to the life, a guilty hearer,
Forc'd by the terror of a wounded conscience,
To make discovery of that which torture
Could not wring from him."

609. *Presently.* Immediately. Cf. 170 above.

611. *For murther*, etc. Cf. *Mach.* iii. 4. 122–126 and *Rich. II.* i. 1. 104. Moberly quotes Wordsworth: —

> "Beliefs coiled serpent-like about
> The adage on all tongues, 'Murder will out.'"

615. *Tent.* Probe; as in *Cymb.* iii. 4. 118: "tent to bottom." We have the noun in *T. and C.* ii. 2. 16: —

> "the tent that searches
> To the bottom of the worst;"

and again, with a play on the word, in *Id.* v. 1. 11. *Blench* = flinch, start. Cf. *T. and C.* i. 1. 28: —

> "Patience herself, what goddess e'er she be,
> Doth lesser blench at sufferance than I do."

617. *The devil hath power*, etc. Cf. 2 *Corinthians*, xi. 14.

621. *Abuses.* Deceives. Cf. *Much Ado*, v. 2. 100: "Hero hath been falsely accused, the prince and Claudio mightily abused," etc.

622. *Relative.* To the purpose, conclusive. S. uses the word nowhere else.

"Shall we," says Dr. Bucknill, "think the less nobly of him because his hand is not ready to shed kindred blood; because, gifted with godlike discourse of reason, he does look before and after; because he does not take the law in his own hands upon his oppressor until he has obtained conclusive evidence of his guilt; that he seeks to make sure he is the natural justiciar of his murdered father, and not an assassin instigated by hatred and selfish revenge?"

ACT III

SCENE I. — 1. *Drift of circumstance.* Roundabout method. Cf. ii. 1. 10: "By this encompassment and drift of question;"

also i. 5. 127: "without more circumstance at all." *Drift* = scheme in *T. G. of V.* ii. 6. 43, iii. 1. 18, iv. 2. 83, etc.

3. *Grating.* Vexing. Cf. *A. and C.* i. 1. 18: "Grates me." So with *on* in 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 1. 90: "suborn'd to grate on you," etc.

7. *Forward.* Disposed, inclined.

8. *Keeps.* For the ellipsis of the subject, cf. ii. 2. 67 above and iv. 1. 10 below. On *crafty madness*, cf. iii. 4. 186: "mad in craft."

12. *With much forcing*, etc. With apparent unwillingness.

13. *Niggard of question*, etc. Malone (so also Schmidt) makes *question* = talk, and explains the passage thus: "Slow to begin conversation, but free enough in his answers to our demands." Wright says: "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were completely baffled, and Hamlet had the talk almost to himself. Perhaps they did not intend to give a correct account of the interview." Dowden remarks: "The courtiers between them try to piece out an account, which will not discredit them, of an unsuccessful interview. . . . They wish to turn off any inquiry as to Hamlet's sharp examination of them and his discovery that they were sent for."

14. *Assay him to.* Try his disposition towards.

17. *O'er-raught.* "Over-reached, that is, overtook" (Johnson). Cf. *C. of E.* i. 2. 96: "o'er-raught of all my money." We find *raught* as both the past tense and the participle of *reach.*

20. *Order.* S. regularly uses the singular in this sense. Cf. v. 2. 365 below.

22. *Beseech'd.* The only instance of the past tense in S.; and the only one of the participle is in *L. C.* 207, where he also has "beseech'd." In *Hen. V.* iii. 2. 115 "beseeched" = besieged.

24. *Content.* Gratify, please; as often in S. Cf. *T. G. of V.* iii. 1. 93: "A woman sometimes scorns what best contents her," etc.

26. *Edge.* Incitement, setting-on. It is a slight modification of *edge* = desire, appetite, as in *Sonn.* 56. 2, *M. for M.* i. 4. 60, *T. of S.* i. 2. 73, etc.

29. *Closely.* Secretly; as in *K. John*, iv. 1. 133, etc.

31. *Affront.* Meet directly, encounter. Cf. *W. T.* v. 1. 75:

"Affront his eye." See also *T. and C.* iii. 2. 174 and *Cymb.* iv. 3. 29.

32. *Lawful espials.* Spies justifiably inquisitive. We find *espials* in the same sense in 1 *Hen. VI.* i. 4. 8 and iv. 3. 6.

33. *Bestow ourselves.* See on ii. 2. 537 above.

40. *Wildness.* Distraction, madness; as in *Cymb.* iii. 4. 9.

43. *Gracious.* Addressed to the king. Cf. "High and mighty," iv. 7. 43 below.

45. *Exercise.* Act of devotion; the book being a prayer-book. Cf. *Rich. III.* iii. 7. 64: "his holy exercise."

47. *Too much prov'd.* Found by too frequent experience (Johnson).

51. *Beautied.* Not elsewhere used by S. as a verb.

52. *To.* Compared to. See on i. 2. 140 above.

53. *Painted.* Falsely coloured, unreal. Cf. *K. John*, iii. 1. 105: "painted peace;" *T. A.* ii. 3. 126: "painted hope," etc.

56. *To be*, etc. "In ii. 2. Hamlet has spoken of suicide as being against the 'canon of the Everlasting.' Here he considers it as viewed by philosophy . . . 'Doubtless it might be more entirely desirable to turn the flank of all sorrows by self-slaughter; and this might be the course which a man of quick decision would take. But reflection, if allowed, must needs make us think that if death is a sleep, it still may have dreams; while conscience warns us what we have deserved that these dreams should be. Thus, instead of condensing into strong purpose, thought melts into mere dreaming meditation; the will is puzzled, the moment of action passes, and we end by inertly bearing our present evils rather than daring to fly to others of whose nature we are ignorant; giving up our deliverance as we should, from the same weakness, give up any other enterprise of pith and moment'" (Moberly).

59. *Take arms against a sea*, etc. *Sea* has been changed to "siege," "assay," "assail," etc.; but no change is called for. There are worse cases of "mixed metaphor" in S. than this, which is rather a fusion, or blending, of metaphors. The expression is =

"take arms against a host of troubles which break in upon us like a sea." Cf. 160 below: "That suck'd the honey of his music vows," which, if a "mixed metaphor," is a very beautiful one — better than many of the "faultily faultless" figures of inferior poets. Keightley says that this is "almost a solitary instance of the figurative use of *sea* by S." On the contrary, it is a common metaphor with him. See *R. of L.* 1100, *T. G. of V.* iii. 1. 224, 1 *Hen. VI.* iv. 7. 14, 3 *Hen. VI.* ii. 5. 106, *Hen. VIII.* ii. 4. 200, iii. 2. 360, *T. and C.* iii. 2. 84, *T. of A.* i. 1. 47, iv. 2. 22, *Per.* v. 1. 194, etc.

61. *No more.* Nothing more.

65. *Rub.* A metaphor taken from the game of bowls. Cf. *Hen. V.* ii. 2. 188, etc. See on *assays of bias*, ii. 1. 65 above.

67. *Coil.* Turmoil. Cf. *Temp.* i. 2. 207, *C. of E.* iii. 1. 48, *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 339, etc. S. never uses the word in the familiar modern sense.

68. *Give us pause.* That is, for reflection. Cf. iii. 3. 42 and iv. 3. 9 below. *Respect* = consideration, motive; as in *Sonn.* 49. 4, *Much Ado*, ii. 3. 176, *A. W.* ii. 5. 71, etc. See also iii. 2. 177 below.

70. *Of time.* Of the times, of the world. Cf. *K. John*, v. 2. 12: "such a sore of time;" 1 *Hen. IV.* iv. 1. 25: "the state of time," etc. S. generally uses the article, as in i. 5. 189 above.

72. *Dispriz'd.* Misprized, undervalued; the folio reading. The 2d and 3d quartos have "despiz'd," which most modern eds. adopt. As Furness remarks, "a love that is disprized falls more frequently to the lot of man, and is perhaps more hopeless in its misery, than a love that is despised." *Disprize* occurs in *T. and C.* iv. 5. 74.

75. *Quietus.* The law term for the final settlement of an account. Cf. *Sonn.* 126. 12: "And her quietus is to render thee." Steevens quotes Webster, *Duchess of Malfi*, i. 1: "I sign your *quietus est.*"

76. *Bare.* Mere, not "unsheathed," as Malone says; though S. may have had the latter meaning also in mind. A *bodkin* was a small dagger. Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 615 and *W. T.* iii. 3. 87. *Fardels*

= burdens; literally, packs, bundles. Cf. *W. T.* iv. 4. 728, 739, 781, 783, etc.

77. *Grunt.* Groan. Steevens quotes many contemporaneous examples; as from Stanyhurst's *Virgil*, 1582: "sighing it grunts" (*congemuit*); Turbervile's *Ovid*: "greefe forst me grunt;" and again: "Of dying men the grunts," etc. See on *guts*, iii. 4. 210, for a similar instance of a word that was in better use formerly than now.

79. *Bourn.* Limit, boundary. Cf. *Temp.* ii. 1. 152: "Bourn, bound of land;" *A. and C.* i. 1. 16: "I 'll set a bourn," etc.

80. *No traveller returns.* This has been foolishly criticised, because the Ghost was such a returned traveller; and as foolishly defended on the ground that the Ghost came only from the intermediate state of Purgatory. Of course, the meaning is, does not come back to *live* here, as he returns from a visit to a foreign land; or, as Coleridge puts it, "no traveller returns to this world as to his home or abiding-place."

83. *Thus conscience*, etc. Blakeway compares *Rich. III.* i. 4. 138 fol.

84. *Native hue.* Natural colour. Cf. *L. L. L.* iv. 3. 263: "For native blood is counted painting now."

85. *Thought.* Anxiety. Cf. iv. 5. 170 below, and *J. C.* ii. 1. 187, etc.

88. *Soft you now.* Hold, stop; as in i. 5. 58 above. Cf. *Oth.* v. 2. 338: "Soft you; a word before you go."

89. *Orisons.* Prayers. Cf. *Hen. V.* ii. 2. 53, 3 *Hen. VI.* i. 4. 110, *R. and J.* iv. 3. 3, etc.

97. *I know*, etc. Ophelia means, they may have been trifles to *you*, and you forgot that you gave them, but *I* did not, for they were most precious to *me*.

103. *Honest.* Virtuous, chaste; as often. So *honesty* = virtue in line 108.

108. *Should admit*, etc. Your honesty should be so chary of your beauty as not to suffer it to be parleyed with.

109. *Commerce.* Intercourse. Cf. *T. N.* iii. 4. 191, *T. and C.* iii. 3. 205, etc.

114. *Sometime.* See on i. 2. 8 above.

118. *Inoculate.* In the botanical sense = graft. Dowden quotes Bishop Hall: "That Palatine vine, late inoculated with a precious bud of our royal stem."

119. *Relish of it.* Have a flavour of it, retain a trace of it.

121. *Get thee.* A common reflexive use of *get* in S., but never with the full form of the pronouns, *thyself*, etc. Cf. *Hen. V.* iv. 1. 287: "gets him to rest;" *J. C.* ii. 4. 37: "I'll get me to a place more void," etc.

122. *Indifferent.* Adverbially = fairly. Cf. v. 2. 99 below; also *T. of S.* i. 2. 181, *T. N.* i. 3. 143, i. 5. 265, etc.

130. *Go thy ways.* See on i. 3. 135 above.

136. *O, help him*, etc. This speech and that in 144 below were first marked *aside* by Furness.

138. *Chaste as ice.* Cf. *A. Y. L.* iii. 4. 18: "the very ice of chastity."

142. *Monsters.* Delius compares *Oth.* iv. 1. 63.

145. *Your paintings.* The *your* refers to women generally, as the plural *yourselves* shows.

147. *Jig.* Walk as if dancing a jig. In *L. L. L.* iii. 1. 11 it means to *sing* a jig or in the manner of a jig. See on ii. 2. 511 above. For the contemptuous use of *amble*, cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* iii. 2. 60, *Rich. III.* i. 1. 17, and *R. and J.* i. 4. 11.

148. *Nickname.* Misname, miscall. Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 349: "You nickname virtue; vice you should have spoke."

Make your wantonness, etc. You mistake wantonly, and pretend that you do it through ignorance; or, perhaps, affect an innocent ignorance as a mask for wantonness.

155. *Scholar's, soldier's.* The early eds. have "soldier's, scholar's," except the 1st quarto, in which the passage reads: —

> "The Courtier, Scholler, Souldier, all in him,
> All dasht and splintered thence, O woe is me," etc.

The correction is Hanmer's, and is generally adopted; but the early text may be what S. wrote. Cf. *R. of L.* 615, 616: —

> "For princes are the glass, the school, the book,
> Where subjects' eyes do learn, do read, do look."

See also *A. and C.* iv. 15. 25.

156. *Fair.* That is, because Hamlet adorns it as the *rose.* For the prolepsis, cf. *Mach.* i. 3. 84: "the insane root;" and see also *Id.* i. 6. 3 and iii. 4. 76.

157. *The glass of fashion.* Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* ii. 3. 21: —

> "he was indeed the glass
> Wherein the noble youth did dress themselves;"

and Ben Jonson, *Cynthia's Revels,* dedic.: "in thee the whole kingdom dresseth itself, and is ambitious to use thee as her glass."

The mould of form. "The model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves" (Johnson).

159. *Deject.* See on i. 2. 20.

160. *Music vows.* See on 59 above.

162. *Jangled out of tune.* Many modern eds. print "jangled, out of tune," but the comma is not in the folio. "The two ideas attached to *bells* are: 1. *jangled out of tune;* 2. *harsh,* which expresses to what extent jangled out of tune" (Corson).

163. *Feature.* Figure, form. Cf. *Sonn.* 113. 12, *K. John,* iv. 2. 264, 1 *Hen. VI.* v. 5. 68, etc. See also iii. 2. 24 below. *Blown* = in its bloom. Cf. iii. 3. 81 below.

164. *Ecstasy.* Madness; as in ii. 1. 102 above.

166. *Affections.* Feelings, inclinations.

167. *Nor . . . not.* See on i. 2. 158 above.

169. *On brood.* Brooding.

170. *Doubt.* Suspect. See on i. 2. 256 above. For *disclose,* see on i. 1. 57. The word was regularly used of the hatching of birds. Cf. v. 1. 296 below. Cf. Massinger, *Maid of Honour,* i. 2:

> "One aerie with proportion ne'er discloses
> The eagle and the wren."

171. *For to.* Cf. v. 1. 98 below.

173. *Shall.* For *shall* = will, cf. 176 below; and for the ellipsis of the verb of motion, ii. 2. 512 above.

177. *Something-settled.* For the compound adjective, cf. *seeming-virtuous*, i. 5. 46 above. For *something* as an adjective, cf. *Rich. II.* ii. 2. 36: "my something grief."

178. *Puts.* Moberly says that *brains* is singular; but S. elsewhere makes it plural. Cf. *A. W.* iv. 3. 216: "his brains are forfeit," etc. The real subject is "the beating of his brains on this."

179. *Fashion of himself.* His usual bearing or behaviour. For *on 't*, see on i. 1. 55 above.

187. *Round.* See on ii. 2. 139 above.

188. *So please you.* If it so please you. The verb was originally impersonal. *In the ear* = within hearing.

189. *Find.* Detect, unmask. Cf. *A. W.* ii. 3. 216, ii. 4. 32, v. 2. 46, 1 *Hen. IV.* i. 3. 3, etc.

Scene II. — 3. *Your.* See on i. 5. 167 above. *Had as lief*, like *had rather*, is good old English, and equally good now.

10. *Periwig-pated.* In the time of S. wigs were worn only by actors; they did not come into general use until the time of Charles II. Cf. *T. G. of V.* iv. 4. 196 and *C. of E.* ii. 2. 76. In *Every Woman in her Humour*, 1609, it is said that "none wear hoods but monks and ladies, . . . none periwigs but players and pictures." *Robustious* occurs again in *Hen. V.* iii. 7. 159.

11. *Groundlings.* The rabble in the pit, which in the theatres of that day had neither floor nor benches. Cf. Ben Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair:* "the understanding gentlemen of the ground;" also *Lady Alimony:* "Be your stage-curtains artificially drawn, and so covertly shrowded that the squint-eyed groundling may not peep in." According to Nares, these gentry paid only a penny for admission.

12. *Inexplicable.* Unintelligible. Johnson explains it as "without words to explain them."

14. *Termagant.* An imaginary god of the Saracens, often introduced into the old mystery-plays, and represented as a most violent character. Cf. Spenser, *F. Q.* vi. 7. 47: "And oftentimes by Turmagant and Mahound swore;" Chaucer, *C. T.* 15221: "He swar, 'Child, by Termagaunt,'" etc. S. uses the word only here and in 1 *Hen. IV.* v. 4. 114, where it is an adjective.

15. *Herod* was also a common character in the old mysteries, and always a violent one. Steevens quotes Chaucer, *C. T.* 3384: "He pleyeth Herod on a scaffold hye." Douce gives a long extract from a pageant performed at Canterbury in 1534, in which this stage-direction occurs: "Here Erode ragis in thys pagond, and in the strete also."

21. *From the purpose.* That is, away from, or contrary to it.

25. *His.* Its. See on i. 4. 26 above. *Pressure* = imprint, character. Cf. i. 5. 100 above.

26. *Come tardy off.* Cf. *T. G. of V.* ii. 1. 115: "it came hardly off," etc.; and for *come* = having come, *R. of L.* 1784: "Weak words, so thick come in his poor heart's aid."

28. *Censure.* Judgment. See on i. 3. 69 above. *Of the which one* = of which one class of persons; or, possibly, as Delius explains it, "of the judicious man singly."

30. *There be.* For this use of *be*, see on i. 5. 177 above.

31. *Profanely.* "The profanity consists in alluding to Christians" (Furness).

33. *Nor man.* Nor even man.

35. *Had made men.* That is, had been making men, had tried their hand at making men (instead of sticking to their regular work on inferior creatures). This seems in keeping with "*imitated* humanity."

38. *Indifferently.* Tolerably well. Cf. *indifferent*, iii. 1. 122 above.

41. *Your clowns*, etc. The clowns were given to this extemporizing. Stowe (quoted by Steevens) informs us that among the twelve actors who were sworn the Queen's Servants in 1583 "were

two rare men, viz. Thomas Wilson, for a quick delicate refined extemporall witte; and Richard Tarleton, for a wondrous plentifull, pleasant extemporall witt," etc. Cf. *Tarleton's Newes out of Purgatory:* "that merrye Roscius of plaiers that famosed all comedies so with his pleasant and extemporall invention;" and, even earlier, *The Contention Betwyxte Churchyard and Camell*, 1560: —

> "But Vices in stage plaies,
> When theyr matter is gon,
> They laugh out the reste
> To the lookers on," etc.

In the 1st quarto this passage reads as follows:

> "*Ham.* And doe you heare? let not your Clowne speake
> More then is set downe, there be of them I can tell you
> That will laugh themselues, to set on some
> Quantitie of barren spectators to laugh with them,
> Albeit there is some necessary point in the Play
> Then to be obserued: O 'tis vile, and shewes
> A pittiful ambition in the foole that vseth it.
> And then you haue some agen, that keepes one sute
> Of ieasts, as a man is knowne by one sute of
> Apparell, and Gentlemen quotes his ieasts downe
> In their tables, before they come to the play, as thus:
> Cannot you stay till I eate my porrige? and, you owe me
> A quarters wages: and, my coate wants a cullison; *
> And, your beere is sowre: and, blabbering with his lips,
> And thus keeping in his cinkapase † of ieasts,
> When, God knows, the warme Clowne cannot make a iest

* A corruption of *cognizance*, or badge of arms (Nares). Cf. *The Owles Almanack*, 1618: "A blew coat without a cullizan." Hentzner, in his *Travels*, 1598, says that in England servants "wear their masters arms in silver, fastened to their left arms."

† That is, *cinque-pace*, a kind of dance. Cf. *Much Ado*, ii. 1. 77: "falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster," etc.

Vnlesse by chance, as the blinde man catcheth a hare:
Maisters tell him of it.
players We will my Lord.
Ham. Well, goe make you ready. *exeunt players.*"

Some critics are inclined to think that this should be retained; but, as White remarks, "it was probably an extemporaneous addition to the text by the actor."

42. *There be of them.* The nominative is often omitted with *is, was, has,* etc.

43. *Barren.* Barren of wit, dull. Cf. *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 13: "that barren sort;" *T. N.* i. 5. 90: "a barren rascal," etc.

48. *Piece of work.* In *M. N. D.* i. 2. 14, Bottom calls the play "a very good piece of work." Cf. *T. of S.* i. 1. 258.

49. *Presently.* See on ii. 2. 170 above.

56. *Coped withal.* Met with, encountered. Cf. *A. Y. L.* ii. 1. 67: "I love to cope him in these sullen fits;" *W. T.* iv. 4. 435: "The royal fool thou copest with," etc.

59. *Revenue.* Accented by S. either on the first or on the second syllable, as suits the measure. Cf. *M. N. D.* i. 1. 7: "Long withering out a young man's revenue;" and 158 in the same scene: "Of great revenue, and she hath no child."

61. *Candied.* Sugared, flattering. Elsewhere it means congealed. See *Temp.* ii. 1. 279 and *T. of A.* iv. 3. 226. *Absurd* is accented on the first syllable before the noun. See on i. 4. 52 above.

62. *Crook.* An instance of "construction according to sense," the real subject being the person implied in *tongue*. *Pregnant* = ready (Johnson); or "because untold thrift is born from a cunning use of the knee" (Furness). On *hinges of the knee*, cf. *T. of A.* iv. 3. 211: "hinge thy knee."

64. *Dear.* See on i. 2. 182.

65. *Of men distinguish.* Cf. 2 *Hen. VI.* ii. 1. 130: "distinguish of colours."

70. *Blood and judgment.* Passion and reason. Cf. *Much Ado,*

ii. 3. 70: "wisdom and blood combating," etc. On the passage cf. *J. C.* v. 5. 73: —

> "His life was gentle, and the elements
> So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
> And say to all the world 'This was a man!'"

75. *Something too much*, etc. "The genuine manliness of this little sentence, where Hamlet checks himself when conscious that he has been carried away by fervour of affectionate friendship into stronger protestation than mayhap becomes the truth and simplicity of sentiment between man and man, is precisely one of Shakespeare's exquisite touches of innate propriety in questions of feeling. Let any one who doubts for a moment whether Shakespeare intended that Hamlet should merely *feign* madness, read carefully over the present speech, marking its sobriety of expression even amid all its ardour, its singleness and purity of sentiment amid its most forcible utterance, and then decide whether it could be possible that he should mean Hamlet's wits to be touched" (Clarke).

79. *Afoot.* Being performed. Cf. *M. for M.* iv. 5. 3: "The matter being afoot," etc.

80. *With the very comment of thy soul.* With all your powers of observation.

81. *Occulted.* Hidden; used by S. nowhere else.

82. *One speech.* The one prepared by Hamlet (ii. 2. 555). For the metaphor in *unkennel*, cf. *M. W.* iii. 3. 174.

83. *Damned ghost.* A "goblin damn'd" (i. 4. 40), and therefore not to be believed. Cf. ii. 2. 616 fol. Douce quotes Spenser, *F. Q.* i. 2. 32: —

> "What voice of damned Ghost from Limbo lake,
> Or guilefull spright wandring in empty aire,
> Both which fraile men doe oftentimes mistake," etc.

85. *Stithy.* Smithy, forge. S. has *stithy* again in *T. and C.* iv. 5. 255, where it is a verb. *Note* = attention; as in *A. W.* iii. 5. 104: "Worthy the note," etc.

88. *In censure of his seeming.* In forming an opinion of his appearance. See on i. 3. 69 above, and cf. *W. T.* iv. 4. 667, *Cymb.* v. 5. 65, etc.

89. *If he steal*, etc. I'll watch him so closely that if he were trying to steal something I would pledge myself to detect him or else to pay for the stolen property. On *the whilst*, cf. *K. John*, iv. 2. 194: "The whilst his iron did on the anvil cool," etc.

90. On *theft* = the thing stolen, cf. *Exodus*, xxii. 4.

91. *Idle.* Some make this refer to his feigned madness. Cf. iii. 4. 11 below and *Lear*, i. 3. 16. But though *idle* is often used in this sense, I am inclined here to agree with Moberly, who explains the passage "I must appear to have nothing to do with the matter."

93. *Fares.* In his reply Hamlet plays upon the word; as Sly does in *T. of S.* ind. 2. 102: "Marry, I fare well; for here is cheer enough." Cf. *P. P.* 186: —

> "'Farewell,' quoth she, 'and come again to-morrow.'
> Fare well I could not, for I supp'd with sorrow."

94. *Of the chameleon's dish.* For another allusion to the popular belief that the chameleon fed on air, see *T. G. of V.* ii. 1. 178; and for references to its supposed changes of colour, *Id.* ii. 4. 26 and 3 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2. 191.

97. *I have nothing*, etc. I have nothing to do with it. Cf. *Cor.* ii. 3. 81; "I have no further with you."

100. *The university.* "The practice of acting Latin plays in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge is very ancient, and continued to near the middle of the last century. They were performed occasionally for the entertainment of princes and other great personages; and regularly at Christmas, at which time a *Lord of Misrule* was appointed at Oxford to regulate the exhibitions, and a similar officer with the title of *Imperator* at Cambridge" (Malone). English plays were also sometimes performed; this very one of *Hamlet* among the number, as the title-page of the 1st quarto proves.

103. *Enact.* Act, play. Cf. *Temp.* iv. 1. 121: —

"Spirits, which by mine art
I have from their confines call'd to enact
My present fancies," etc.

104. *Cæsar.* A Latin play on the subject of Cæsar's death was performed at Oxford in 1582. On the erroneous notion that Cæsar was killed "i' the Capitol," cf. *J. C.* iii. 1. and *A. and C.* ii. 6. 18.

106. *A brute part.* For the play on *Brutus*, cf. Sir John Harrington, *Metamorphosis of Ajax*, 1596: "O brave-minded Brutus! but this I must truly say, they were two brutish parts both of him and you; one to kill his sons for treason, the other to kill his father in treason."

108. *Stay upon.* Await. Cf. "stay upon your leisure" (*A. W.* iii. 5. 48, *Macb.* i. 3. 148), "stays upon your will" (*A. and C.* i. 2. 119), etc.

109. *Patience* = permission; as in "by your patience" (*Temp.* iii. 3. 3, *A. Y. L.* v. 4. 186, *Hen. V.* iii. 6. 31, etc.), "with your patience" (1 *Hen. VI.* ii. 3. 78), etc.

117. *Jig-maker.* See on ii. 2. 513 above.

120. *Within 's.* Within this. Cf. *R. and J.* v. 2. 25: "Within this three hours," etc.

123. *For I 'll have a suit of sables.* Capell and others take *sables* to mean the fur of the sable, which was used only in rich and splendid apparel. Malone says that by a statute of Henry VIII. no one under the rank of an earl could wear sables. Cf. iv. 7. 79 below, where "sables" are mentioned, not as badges of mourning, but as "importing health and graveness" — the dignified apparel of age as opposed to "the light and careless livery" of youth.

127. *Not thinking on.* That is, being forgotten.

128. *The hobby-horse.* A figure in the rural May-games and morris-dances, referred to in ballads of the time as "forgot," either because it came to be omitted from the games or because of the attempts of the Puritans to put down these sports. Cf. *L. L. L.* iii. 1. 30.

The dumb-show. This stage-direction agrees substantially with

that in the folio. Why the "dumb-show" should have been introduced is a question that has been much discussed but not satisfactorily settled. See Furness, vol. i. pp. 241–243.

131. *Miching mallecho.* Probably = secret and insidious mischief. Florio, in his *Ital. Dict.*, 1598, defines *acciapinare* as "To miche, to shrug or sneake in some corner." *Micher* = truant, occurs in 1 *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 450. Minsheu gives "To Miche, or secretly to hide himselfe out of the way, as Truants doe from schoole." *Mallecho* is the Spanish *malhecho* (literally, ill-done). Dyce quotes Connelly's *Spanish Dict.*: "*Malhecho* . . . An evil action, an indecent and indecorous behaviour; malefaction." Cf. Shirley, *Gent. of Venice*: "Be humble, Thou man of mallecho, or thou diest."

133. *Belike.* As it seems, very likely. Cf. *M. N. D.* i. 1. 130, *Hen. V.* iii. 7. 55, etc. It is followed by *that* in *T. G. of V.* ii. 4. 90. *Argument* = plot; as in ii. 2. 367 above.

146. *Posy.* Motto; such as were inscribed on rings. See *M. of V.* v. 1. 148. Hamlet refers to the brevity of the prologue, as Ophelia evidently understands.

149. *Cart.* Chariot; but obsolete in that sense in the time of S.

150. *Wash.* The sea. In *K. John*, v. 6. 41 and v. 7. 63, it means the "flats," or land overflowed by the tide.

151. *Sheen.* Shine, light. Used by S. only here and in *M. N. D.* ii. 1. 29, where also it is a rhyming word.

154. *Commutual.* An intensified form of *mutual*; used by S. only here.

157. *Woe is me.* The old form was "woe is to me" = is mine. In *M. for M.* i. 4. 26, we find "Woe me!"

158. *Cheer.* Cheerfulness; as often.

159. *Distrust.* Am anxious about you.

161. *Holds quantity* = are proportioned to each other. Cf. *M. N. D.* i. 1. 232: "Things base and vile, holding no quantity," etc.

162. *In neither*, etc. "They either contain nothing, or what they contain is in extremes."

164. *Sized.* Used by S. only here; but we find *great-sized* (*large-sized, small-sized*, etc. are still in colloquial use) in *T. and C.* iii. 3. 147 and v. 10. 26. Cf. *A. and C.* iv. 15. 4.

165. *Littlest.* Walker quotes Beaumont and Fletcher, *Queen of Corinth*, iv. 1: "The poorest littlest page." He also gives examples of *gooder* and *goodest*, *badder* and *baddest*, from writers of the time. Chaucer has *badder* in *C. T.* 10538.

168. *Operant.* Active; used by S. only here and in *T. of A.* iv. 3. 25: "most operant poison." For *leave*, see on i. 2. 155 above.

175. *Wormwood.* For the figure, cf. *R. of L.* 893 and *L. L. L.* v. 2. 857.

176. *Instances.* Inducements, motives. Cf. *A. W.* iv. 1. 44: "What 's the instance?" *Rich. III.* 3. 2. 25: "wanting instance," etc.

177. *Respects.* Considerations. Cf. iii. 1. 68 above.

178. *Kill . . . dead.* Elze compares *T. A.* iii. 1. 92: "he kill'd me dead." He might have added *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 269: "kill her dead?"

182. *Purpose*, etc. Purposes last only so long as they are remembered.

183. *Validity.* Value, efficacy. Cf. *A. W.* v. 3. 192, *T. N.* i. 1. 12, etc.

185. *Fall.* For the "confusion of construction," cf. *destroy* in 191 just below.

186. *Most necessary*, etc. "The performance of a resolution in which only the *resolver* is interested is a debt only to himself, which he may therefore remit at pleasure" (Johnson).

191. *Enactures.* Action (Schmidt); or, perhaps, resolutions (Johnson).

192. *Where joy*, etc. "The very temper that is most cast down with grief is also most capable of joy, and passes from one to the other with slenderest cause" (Moberly).

195. *Our loves.* The love which others feel for us.

197. *Whether.* See on ii. 2. 17 above.

198. *Favourites flies.* Cf. *V. and A.* 1128: —

> "She lifts the coffer-lids that close his eyes
> Where, lo! two lamps burnt out in darkness lies."

There, as here, the form seems to be due to the rhyme. See also *Sonn.* 41. 3.

201. *Not needs.* Cf. *Temp.* v. 1. 38: "Whereof the ewe not bites," etc.

203. *Seasons.* Cf. i. 3. 81 above.

205. *Contrary.* The accent on the penult, as in "Mary, Mary, quite contrary," etc. Cf. *K. John*, iv. 2. 198 and *T. of A.* iv. 3. 144. For the other accent cf. *R. and J.* iii. 2. 64: "What storm is this that blows so contrary?" etc.

209. *Die.* The 3d person imperative, or "subjunctive used imperatively." See other examples in the speech that follows, and in 220, 221, etc.

213. *An anchor's cheer.* An anchorite's fare. Steevens quotes the old *Romance of Robert the Devil*, printed by Wynkyn de Worde: "We have robbed and killed nonnes, holy aunkers, preestes;" and again: "the foxe will be an aunker, for he begynneth to preche."

214. *Opposite.* Contrary thing; as in *A. and C.* i. 2. 130. Oftener in S. it is = opponent, adversary; as in v. 2. 62 below. Cf. *Lear*, v. 3. 42: —

> "you have the captives
> That were the opposites of this day's strife;"

and *Id.* v. 3. 153: "An unknown opposite." *Blanks* = blanches, makes pale; the only instance of the verb in S.

219. *Deeply sworn.* Cf. *Rich. III.* iii. 1. 158: "Thou art sworn as deeply to effect;" *K. John*, iii. 1. 231: "deep-sworn faith," etc.

226. *Argument.* See on 133 above.

231. *Tropically.* By a trope, or "a figure in rhetoric" (*A. Y. L.* v. 1. 45); used by S. nowhere else.

232. *Image.* Representation; as in *Mach.* ii. 3. 83, *Lear*, v. 3. 264, etc.

233. *Duke's.* Elsewhere he is a *king*. *King*, *duke*, and *count* were often confounded in sense. In the mouths of Dull, Armado, and Dogberry, *duke* may have been intended as a blunder, but hardly so in the case of the princess in *L. L. L.* ii. 1. 38. Cf. Viola's use of *count* in *T. N.* v. 1. 263 with *Id.* i. 2. 25.

234. *Baptista* is properly a man's name, as in *T. of S.* Hunter says that he has known it to be a female name in England; and it is sometimes so used even in Italy.

236. *Free.* See on ii. 2. 579 above. *Let the gall'd jade wince* is apparently a proverb. Steevens quotes Edwards, *Damon and Pythias*, 1582: "I know the gall'd horse will soonest wince."

239. *Chorus.* Explaining the action of the play, as in *W. T.*, *R. and J.*, and *Hen. V.*

240. *I could interpret*, etc. Alluding to the interpreter who used to sit on the stage at puppet-shows and explain them to the audience. Cf. *T. G. of V.* ii. 1. 101 and *T. of A.* i. 1. 34. Steevens quotes Greene, *Groatsworth of Wit:* "It was I that . . . for seven years' space was absolute interpreter of the puppets." In the present passage some of the critics see an indirect meaning; but, as Schmidt remarks, it is more probable that the allusion is simply "to a puppet-show in which Ophelia and her lover were to play a part."

244. *The croaking raven*, etc. Mr. Simpson (in the London *Academy*, Dec. 19, 1874) says: "Hamlet rolls into one two lines of an old familiar play, *The True Tragedie of Richard the Third:*—

> "'The screeking raven sits croking for revenge,
> Whole herds of beasts comes bellowing for revenge.'"

247. *Confederate.* Conspiring, favouring, assisting.

248. *Midnight weeds.* Steevens compares *Mach.* iv. 1. 25: "Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark."

249. *Hecate.* A dissyllable, as elsewhere in S.

251. *On wholesome life usurp.* Cf. *Per.* iii. 2. 82: "Death may usurp on nature many hours."

262–265. *Why, let the strucken deer*, etc. The stanza is probably a quotation from some ballad.

266. *Feathers.* Much worn on the stage in the time of S.

267. *Turn Turk.* Proverbially = to undergo a complete change for the worse. Cf. *Much Ado*, iii. 4. 57.

268. Some make *Provincial* refer to Provence, others to Provins near Paris. Both were famous for their roses. The reference is to rosettes of ribbon worn on shoes. Fairholt quotes *Friar Bacon's Prophecy*, 1604:—

> "When roses in the gardens grew,
> And not in ribbons on a shoe;
> Now ribbon-roses take such place
> That garden-roses want their grace."

Razed. Slashed; that is, with cuts or openings in them. Stubbes, in his *Anatomie of Abuses*, 1585, has a chapter on corked shoes, which, he says, are "some of black velvet, some of white, some of red, some of greene, razed, carved, cut, and stitched all over with Silke."

269. *Cry.* Company; literally, a pack of hounds. Cf. *Cor.* iii. 3. 120: "You common cry of curs!" (see also iv. 6. 148); *Oth.* ii. 3. 370: "not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry," etc.

270. *Share.* "The actors in our author's time had not annual salaries as at present. The whole receipts of each theatre were divided into *shares*, of which the proprietors of the theatre, or *house-keepers*, as they were called, had some; and each actor had one or more shares, or part of a share, according to his merit" (Malone).

271. *A whole one, I.* A whole one, say I.

275. *Pajock.* Peacock; which is substituted by some editors. Dyce says: "I have often heard the lower classes in the north of

Scotland call the peacock the 'pea-jock;' and their almost invariable name for the turkey-cock is 'bubbly-jock.'"

276. *Rhymed.* The natural rhyme, of course, is easily discerned, and expresses his contempt for his uncle, who has allowed himself to be so easily unmasked.

283. *Recorders.* A kind of flageolet.

285. *Perdy.* A corruption of *par Dieu.* Cf. *Hen. V.* ii. 1. 52, etc.

292. *Marvellous.* For the adverbial use, cf. ii. 1. 3 above. *Distempered* = discomposed, disturbed. Cf. *Temp.* iv. 1. 145: "touch'd with anger so distemper'd," etc. The word was also used of bodily disorder (as in 2 *Hen. IV.* iii. 1. 41), and so Hamlet pretends to understand it. For the noun, see ii. 2. 55.

296. *Should.* Would; as in ii. 2. 206 above. For *more richer*, see on ii. 1. 11.

297. *Put him to his purgation.* A play upon the legal and medical senses of the word. Cf. *A. Y. L.* v. 4. 45, *Hen. VIII.* v. 3. 152, etc.

301. *Into some frame.* That is, "frame of sense" (*M. for M.* v. 1. 61). Cf. *L. L. L.* iii. 1. 193: "out of frame" (that is, disordered).

303. *Pronounce.* Speak out, say on. Cf. *Temp.* iii. 3. 76, *Macb.* iii. 4. 7, etc.

310. *Pardon.* Leave to go. See on i. 2. 56 above.

314. *Wholesome.* Reasonable; or perhaps, sane, sensible. Cf. *Cor.* ii. 3. 66: —

> "Speak to 'em, I pray you,
> In wholesome manner."

320. *Admiration.* Wonder; as in i. 2. 192 above.

325. *Closet.* Chamber; as in ii. 1. 77, iii. 3. 27, etc. Cf. *Matthew*, vi. 6.

327. *Trade.* Business. Cf. *T. N.* iii. 1. 83: "if your trade be to her," etc.

329. *Pickers and stealers.* Hands; which the Church Catechism admonishes us to keep from "picking and stealing."

330. *Your cause of distemper.* The cause of your distemper. Cf. i. 4. 73: "your sovereignty of reason," etc.

337. *While the grass grows.* Malone quotes the whole proverb from Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578: "Whylst grass doth growe, oft sterves the seely steede;" and the *Paradise of Daintie Devises*, 1578: "While grass doth growe, the silly horse he starves."

339. *To withdraw with you.* Probably = to speak a word in private with you. Sundry other explanations have been suggested.

340. *Go about.* Undertake, attempt; as often. Cf. *Romans*, x. 3. *To recover the wind of me* is a hunting term, meaning to get to windward of the game, so that it may not scent the toil or its pursuers. Cf. *Gentleman's Recreation:* "Observe how the wind is, that you may set the net so as the hare and wind may come together; if the wind be sideways it may do well enough, but never if it blow over the net into the hare's face, for he will scent both it and you at a distance."

342. *If my duty*, etc. If my sense of duty makes me too bold, it is my *love* for you that causes it. *Bold* and *unmannerly* have essentially the same meaning.

351. *Ventages.* Vents, holes; used by S. nowhere else.

363. *'Sblood.* See on ii. 2. 379 above. These oaths were extremely common in that day, and indeed much earlier.

365. *Fret.* There is a play upon the word. *Frets* are stops, or "small lengths of wire on which the fingers press the strings in playing the guitar" (Busby's *Dict. of Musical Terms*).

378. *By and by.* Presently, soon; as often in S.

379. *To the top of my bent.* To the utmost, as much as I could wish. For *bent*, see on ii. 2. 30 above.

384. *'T is now*, etc. Cf. *Mach.* ii. 1. 49 fol.

390. *Nero.* For another allusion to his murder of his mother, see *K. John*, v. 2. 152.

392. *Speak daggers.* Cf. iii. 4. 93: "These words like daggers enter in mine ears;" and *Much Ado*, ii. 1. 255: "She speaks

poniards, and every word stabs." See also *Proverbs*, xii. 18. It is not necessary to suppose that Hamlet had seriously thought of killing his mother. He may be recalling the injunction of the Ghost: Revenge my murder, but only on your uncle, not on your mother. And yet he must *speak* daggers to her, though he is to use none against her.

394. *How . . . soever.* For the tmesis, cf. i. 5. 170 above; also *M. W.* iv. 2. 25, etc. *How* is sometimes = however; as in *Much Ado*, iii. 1. 60: —

> "I never yet saw man,
> How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featur'd,
> But she would spell him backward," etc.

Shent = rebuked, reproached. Cf. *M. W.* i. 4. 38: "We shall all be shent;" *Cor.* v. 2. 104: "Do you hear how we are shent?" etc. It is the participle of *shend*, which is found (= destroy) in Fairfax's *Tasso*, vi. 4: "But we must yield whom hunger soon will shend."

395. *Give them seals.* Confirm them by action. Cf. *Cor.* ii. 3. 115: "I will not seal your knowledge with showing them;" 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 5. 104: "Thou hast seal'd up my expectation," etc.

Scene III. — 9. *Many many.* Cf. *K. John*, i. 1. 183: "many a many foot." Wright compares *Hen. V.* iv. 2. 33: "A very little little let us do."

11. *Single and peculiar.* Individual and private.

13. *Noyance.* Injury; not to be printed "'noyance," as it often is. It is used by S. only here.

14. *Depends and rests.* Singular verbs are often used before plural nominatives.

15. *Cease.* Decease. The only instance of *cease* as a noun in S. except the doubtful one in *Lear*, v. 3. 264.

16. *Gulf.* Whirlpool; as often. Cf. *R. of L.* 557, *Hen. V.* ii. 4. 10, iv. 3. 82, etc.

17. *Massy.* S. uses the word five times (cf. *Temp.* iii. 3. 67,

Much Ado, iii. 3. 147, *T. and C.* prol. 17, ii. 3. 18), *massive* not at all.

21. *Annexment.* A word not found elsewhere. *Annexion* occurs in *L. C.* 208.

24. *Arm you.* Prepare yourselves. Cf. *M. N. D.* i. 1. 117:—

> "For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
> To fit your fancies to your father's will."

25. *Fear.* Object of fear; as in *M. N. D.* v. 1. 21:—

> "Or in the night, imagining some fear,
> How easy is a bush suppos'd a bear!"

26. *We will haste us.* Cf. *Lear*, v. 3. 251: "Haste thee," etc.

29. *Tax him home.* Reprove him soundly. See on i. 4. 18 above. Cf. iii. 4. 1 below; also *M. for M.* iv. 3. 148: "Accuse him home and home," etc.

30. *As you said.* "Polonius's own suggestion, which, courtier-like, he ascribes to the king" (Moberly).

32. *Them.* That is, mothers.

33. *Of vantage.* By some opportunity of secret observation.

37. *Eldest.* Used now only in the sense of eldest-born. Cf. *Temp.* v. 1. 186: "your eld'st acquaintance cannot be three hours."

39. *Though inclination be as sharp as will.* This has puzzled some critics, and changes have been suggested; but *inclination* and *will* are not identical. As Boswell says, "I may *will* to do a thing because my understanding points it out to me as right, though I am not *inclined* to it."

42. *In pause.* In doubt or consideration. Cf. iii. 1. 68 above.

47. *Confront.* To face, or rather outface.

49. *To be forestalled*, etc. "What is the very meaning of prayer, except that we pray first not to be led into temptation, and then to be delivered from evil?" On *forestall* = prevent, cf. v. 2. 224 below.

55. *Ambition.* The realization of my ambition; the cause for the effect, like *offence* in the next line. Cf. *theft* in iii. 2. 90.

57. *Currents.* Courses. Some editors read "'currents" = "occurrents" (see v. 2. 364 below); but the mixing or blending of metaphors is no worse than in the use of the very same word in iii. 1. 87 above; and though it is easily avoided here by the apostrophe, I prefer to stick to the old text.

59. *The wicked prize,* etc. The guilty gain itself (or a part of it) is used to bribe the officers of the law; as has often happened in these latter days.

61. *Lies.* Used in the legal sense.

62. *His.* Its. See on i. 4. 26 above.

64. *Rests.* Remains; as in *A. Y. L.* i. 2. 298, etc.

65. *Can.* Can do. Cf. *Temp.* iv. 1. 27: "Our worser genius can," etc.

68. *Limed.* Caught (as with bird-lime). Cf. *R. of L.* 88: "Birds never lim'd no secret bushes fear." See also 3 *Hen. VI.* v. 6. 13, 17, *Mach.* iv. 2. 34, etc.

69. *Engaged.* Entangled. Cf. Milton, *Comus,* 193: "They had engag'd their wandering steps too far;" and *P. R.* iii. 347 (where Satan is trying to ensnare Christ): —

> "That thou mayst know I seek not to engage
> Thy virtue," etc.

In architecture, *engaged* columns are probably so called because they are caught or entangled, as it were, in the wall. *Make assay* = make trial. Some take *assay* to be = onset, attack; as in *Hen. V.* i. 2. 151, etc. It has been suggested that *make assay* is addressed to himself, not to the angels.

73. *Now might I,* etc. This speech has been considered inhuman and unworthy of Hamlet. According to Coleridge, it is rather his way of excusing himself for putting off the act of vengeance. It seems better, however, with Moberly to regard this notion of killing soul and body at once as the natural impulse of

his mind. It does not strike me as unnatural that the sight of the king at prayer should suggest the idea that killing him then and there would be sending him straight to heaven, and that for the moment Hamlet should shrink from doing this. His first thought is not so much of sending him to hell as of *not* sending him to heaven; but he dwells upon it in his usual meditative fashion until it leads him logically to that "damn'd and black" conclusion.

75. *That would be scann'd.* That should be carefully considered.

80. *Grossly.* The word refers to *father*, not to *took*. *Full of bread*, as Malone notes, is suggested by *Ezekiel*, xvi. 49.

81. *Broad blown.* Cf. i. 5. 76: "in the blossoms of my sin." *Flush* = in its prime, in full vigour. Cf. *A. and C.* i. 4. 52: "flush youth."

82. *And how*, etc. Warburton says that the Ghost had told him how his audit stood; but Ritson replies that, the Ghost being in purgatory, it was doubtful how long he might have to stay there.

83. *In our circumstance and course of thought.* From our human point of view and according to our line of thought. For *circumstance* = condition, state of things, cf. *T. G. of V.* i. 1. 37: "So, by your circumstance, I fear you'll prove." See also i. 3. 102 above.

84. *'T is heavy with him.* It goes hard with him, or he "hath a heavy reckoning to make" (*Hen. V.* iv. 1. 141).

85. *Purging.* Cf. i. 5. 13 above; and on *season'd*, iii. 2. 203.

88. *Hent.* Hold, seizure. No other example of the noun has been found, but the verb (= take) occurs in *W. T.* iv. 3. 133 and *M. for M.* iv. 6. 14. *A more horrid hent* = a more terrible occasion.

95. *Stays.* Is waiting for me. Cf. *T. G. of V.* i. 2. 131: "Dinner is ready, and your father stays," etc.

96. *This physic.* That is, this temporary forbearance of mine is like a medicine that merely delays the fatal end of the disease.

SCENE IV. — 1. *Straight.* See on ii. 2. 443 above; and for *home*, on iii. 3. 29.

2. *Broad.* Free, unrestrained. Cf. *Macb.* iii. 4. 23 and iii. 6. 21.

4. *Silence.* The reading of the early eds. Some editors adopt Hanmer's emendation, "Sconce me even here," which is plausible, but not really called for. *I'll silence me even here* = I 'll say no more.

5. *Round.* See on ii. 2. 139 above.

7. *Fear me not.* See on i. 3. 51 above.

14. *Rood.* Cross, crucifix. Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* iii. 2. 3, *Rich. III.* iii. 2. 77, iv. 4. 165, etc. We have it in the name of *Holyrood Palace*, Edinburgh. See also 1 *Hen. IV.* i. 1. 52.

19. *Set you up a glass.* Cf. iii. 2. 23 above: "hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature."

30. *Kill a king!* According to the *Hystorie of Hamblet* (see p. 13 above) the queen was not privy to the murder of her husband. Cf. the 1st quarto: —

> "But as I haue a soule, I sweare by heauen,
> I neuer knew of this most horride murder."

34. *Wringing of.* Cf. i. 5. 175: "pronouncing of," etc.

38. *Proof.* Cf. *W. T.* iv. 4. 872: "I am proof against that title," etc. But the word in this sense was also a noun, as in *Rich. II.* i. 3. 73: "Add proof unto mine armour," etc. Cf. ii. 2. 503 above: "forg'd for proof eterne." *Sense* = feeling.

39. *Wag thy tongue.* Wright quotes *Hen. VIII.* i. 1. 33: "Durst wag his tongue in censure." He might have added *Id.* v. 3. 127: "And think with wagging of your tongue to win me." In the same speech (131), we have "wag his finger at thee."

41. *That.* For *such . . . that*, cf. *J. C.* i. 3. 316, *Macb.* iv. 3. 322, etc. Just below we have *such . . . as.* Cf. *Sonn.* 73. 5, 9.

42. *The rose.* "The *ornament*, the *grace*, of an innocent love" (Boswell). Cf. iii. 1. 156 above.

44. *Sets a blister there.* Wright explains this, "brands as a harlot," and refers to *C. of E.* ii. 2. 138. Cf. iv. 5. 101 below.

46. *Contraction.* The marriage contract. S. uses the word nowhere else.

48. *Rhapsody.* A senseless medley; used by S. only here.

49. *This solidity,* etc. The earth; the only instance of *solidity* in S.

50. *Tristful.* Sorrowful (Fr. *triste*). Cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 434 "My tristful queen." *As against the doom* = as if doomsday were coming. For *against,* see on i. 1. 158.

51. *Thought-sick.* Cf. iii. 1. 85: "Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

52. *Index.* Prologue. The index was formerly placed at the beginning of a book. Cf. *Rich. III.* ii. 2. 149, iv. 4. 85, *T. and C.* i 3. 343, and *Oth.* ii. 1. 263.

53. *Look here,* etc. The original practice of the stage seems to have been to have the two pictures hanging in the queen's closet They are so represented in a print prefixed to Rowe's *Hamlet,* published in 1709. Afterwards it became the fashion for Hamlet to take two miniatures from his pocket; but as Hamlet would not be likely to carry his uncle's picture in that way, a Bath actor suggested snatching it from his mother's neck. Another arrangement was to have the new king's portrait hanging on the wall, while Hamlet took his father's from his bosom. Fitzgerald, in his *Life of Garrick,* suggested that the pictures be seen with the mind's eye only; and this is followed by Irving and Salvini. Fechter tore the miniature from the queen's neck and threw it away. Edwin Booth made use of two miniatures, taking one from his own neck and the other from the queen's (Furness).

54. *Counterfeit.* Cf. the use of the noun in *Sonn.* 16. 8: "Your painted counterfeit;" and see also *M. of V.* iii. 2. 116 and *T. of A.* v. 1. 83. *Presentment* = representation. In the only other instance of the word in S. (*T. of A.* i. 1. 27) it means presentation.

56. *Hyperion's.* See on i. 2. 140 above. *The front of Jove;* that is, the forehead; as in *Rich. III.* i. 1. 9: "his wrinkled front," etc.

58. *Station.* Attitude in standing. Cf. *Macb.* v. 8. 42 and *A. and C.* iii. 3. 22.

59. *New-lighted.* Cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* i. 1. 63: "new-lighted from his

horse." S. is fond of compounds with *new;* as "new-added" (*J. C.* iv. 3. 109), "new-apparelled" (*C. of E.* iv. 3. 14), "new-built" (*T. of S.* v. 2. 118, *Cymb.* i. 5. 59), "new-crowned" (*M. of V.* iii. 2. 50, *K. John*, iv. 2. 35), "new-fallen" (*V. and A.* 354, *A. Y. L.* v. 4. 182, 1 *Hen. IV.* v. 1. 44) and so on. For *heaven-kissing*, cf. *R. of L.* 1370: "cloud-kissing Ilion."

66. *Leave.* See on i. 2. 155 above.

67. *Batten.* Fatten. Cf. *Cor.* iv. 5. 35: "batten on cold bits;" Milton, *Lycidas*, 29: "battening our flocks," etc.

69. *Hey-day.* Frolicsome wildness. Steevens quotes Ford, '*Tis Pity*, etc.: "The hey-day of your luxury." S. does not use it elsewhere as a noun. We have it as an exclamation in *Temp.* ii. 2. 190, *Rich. III.* iv. 4. 460, *T. and C.* v. 1. 73, and *T. of A.* i. 2. 137. *Highday* in *M. of V.* ii. 9. 98 is another word = holiday.

71, 72. *Sense . . . motion. Sense* = sensibility, sensation; and *motion* = impulse, desire (as in *M. for M.* i. 4. 59: "The wanton stings and motions of the sense," etc.).

73. *Apoplex'd.* Affected as with apoplexy. *Err* = err so.

74. *Ecstasy.* Insanity; as in ii. 1. 102 and iii. 1. 164 above.

75. *Quantity.* Measure, degree. "Sense was never so dominated by the delusions of insanity but that it retained some power of choice."

76. *To serve*, etc. "To help your decision where the difference is so complete."

77. *Hoodman-blind.* Blind-man's-buff. Cf. *A. W.* iv. 3. 136: "Hoodman comes!" Cf. Baret, *Alvearie:* "The Hoodwinke play, or hoodmanblinde, in some places called the blindmanbuf."

79. *Sans.* The word was fully Anglicized in the time of S. We find "sanse" or "sance" as the definition of *sans* in some of the old French dictionaries, and Florio (*Ital. Dict.*) defines *senza* by "sanse."

81. *So mope.* Be so stupid. Cf. *Temp.* v. 1. 239: "And were brought moping hither" (that is, bewildered); and *Hen. V.* iii. 7. 143: "to mope with his fat-brained followers."

83. *Mutine.* The same as *mutiny* (= rebel), which S. elsewhere uses. We find *mutine* as a noun (= a rebel) in v. 2. 6 below, and also in *K. John*, ii. 1. 378. *Mutineer* occurs once (*Temp.* iii. 2. 40), and so does *mutiner* (*Cor.* i. 1. 254).

86. *Compulsive.* Cf. *compulsative*, i. 1. 103 above. *Compulsive* occurs again in *Oth.* iii. 2. 454. On *gives the charge*, cf. *R. of L.* 434.

88. *Panders will.* Panders to appetite.

90. *Grained.* Dyed in grain. Marsh (*Lect. on Eng. Lang.*) shows that *grain* originally meant the dye *kermes*, obtained from the coccus insect; but as this sense grew less familiar, and the word came to be used chiefly as expressive of *fastness* of colour, an idea which was associated with dyeing *in the wool* or other raw material, *dyed in grain* got this latter meaning. Cf. Cotgrave, *Fr. Dict.*: "Graine: . . . graine wherewith cloth is dyed in graine; Scarlet dye, Scarlet in graine."

91. *Leave their tinct.* Part with or give up their dye. On *leave*, cf. *M. of V.* v. 1. 172, 196, *Cor.* ii. 3. 180, etc.; and on *tinct*, cf. *Cymb.* ii. 2. 23. The latter word = tincture in *A. W.* v. 3. 102 and *A. and C.* i. 5. 37.

93. *In.* Into; as often.

96. *Precedent.* Former; used also in *T. of A.* i. 1. 133, and *A. and C.* iv. 14. 83, and with the same accent as here. The *noun* is always accented on the first syllable. See v. 2. 256 below; also *M. of V.* iv. 1. 220, etc. *A vice of kings* = a clown of a king; alluding to the *Vice* in the old moralities or moral-plays. Cf. *T. N.* iv. 2. 134:

> "Like to the old Vice,
> * * * * *
> Who, with dagger of lath,
> In his rage and his wrath,
> Cries, ah, ha! to the devil," etc.

The Vice was equipped with a wooden sword or dagger, with which he used to beat the devil, and sometimes tried to pare his nails. Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* iii. 2. 343 and *Hen. V.* iv. 4. 76.

97. *Cutpurse.* Purses were usually worn outside, attached to the girdle.

100. *A king of shreds and patches.* Referring to the motley dress worn by the professional fool, and generally by the Vice.

101. The stage direction in the 1st quarto is "*Enter the Ghost in his night gowne;*" that is, in his dressing-gown. Cf. *Macb.* ii. 2. 70.

105. *Laps'd in time and passion.* The meaning seems to be, having let time slip by while indulging in mere passion.

106. *Important.* Momentous: or, perhaps, urgent (as in *C. of E.* v. 1. 138, *Much Ado*, ii. 1. 74, etc.).

112. *Conceit.* Imagination. Cf. *W. T.* iii. 2. 145: "with mere conceit and fear;" *Rich. II.* ii. 2. 33: "'T is nothing but conceit," etc.

116. *Incorporal.* Immaterial. Cf. *corporal* in *J. C.* iv. 1. 33, *Macb.* i. 3. 81, etc. S. uses neither *corporeal* nor *incorporeal.*

119. *Bedded.* Lying flat (Schmidt). *Excrements* = excrescences, outgrowths (as if from *excrescere*, like *increment* from *increscere*). Cf. *C. of E.* ii. 2. 79, *L. L. L.* v. 1. 109, *M. of V.* iii. 2. 87, and *W. T.* iv. 4. 734.

120. For *an end*, see on i. 5. 19 above.

121. *Distemper.* Cf. ii. 2. 55 and iii. 2. 292 above.

125. *Capable.* Capable of feeling, susceptible. Cf. *A. Y. L.* iii. 5. 23: "the capable impressure." See also iii. 2. 10 above, and cf. *incapable* = insensible, in iv. 7. 177 below.

127. *Effects.* Action. Cf. *V. and A.* 605, *Lear*, i. 1. 188, etc. *Convert my stern effects* = change my stern action, or the execution of my stern purpose.

128. *Will want true colour.* Will lose its proper character.

133. *In his habit*, etc. In his dress as when alive. See on 101 above.

136. *Ecstasy.* See on 74 above. The meaning here is evident from Hamlet's reply.

141. *Re-word.* Repeat in the same words. Cf. *L. C.* 1, where it is applied to the echo.

148. *What is to come.* That is, what is to come if the future is to be like the past.

150. *Forgive*, etc. Hamlet asks his mother to pardon the candour of his virtuous reproof, emphasizing it by line 151. It is not an "aside," as some have supposed.

151. *Pursy.* Swelled with pampering. Cf. *T. of A.* v. 4. 12: "pursy insolence."

153. *Curb.* Bend or bow.

154. "Note the use of the more affectionate *thou*" (Furness).

155. *Worser.* Often used by S. See *R. of L.* 249, 294, 453; *M. N. D.* ii. 1. 208, *Rich. III.* i. 3. 102, etc.

Moberly remarks here: "The manly compassion of a pure heart to the weak and fallen could not express itself with more happy persuasiveness than in this reply, which takes the unhappy queen's mere wail of sorrow and transmutes it to a soul-strengthening resolve."

158. *Assume a virtue*, etc. Not suggesting hypocrisy, as it might be understood if not interpreted by the context.

159–163. *That monster . . . put on.* Many attempts have been made to amend the passage, but without really amending it. As it stands, the meaning seems to be: That monster, custom, who destroys all sensibility (or sensitiveness), the evil genius of our habits (that is, bad ones), is yet an angel in this respect, that it tends to give to our good actions also the ease and readiness of habit. Moberly paraphrases the latter part of the passage thus: "Just as a new dress of uniform becomes familiar to us by habit, so custom enables us readily to execute the outward and practical part of the good and fair actions which we inwardly desire to do."

169. *To be blest.* By God; that is, when you are repentant.

170. *For.* As for. Cf. i. 5. 139 above.

172. *To punish me*, etc. "To punish me by making me the instrument of this man's death, and to punish this man by my hand" (Malone).

173. *Their.* For the plural use of *heaven*, cf. *heavens*, ii. 2. 38 above.

174. *Bestow him.* Dispose of him, put him out of the way. Cf. *M. W.* iv. 2. 48: "Which way should he go? how should I bestow him? Shall I put him into the basket again?" See also on ii. 2. 537 above.

180. *Bloat.* Bloated. See on i. 2. 20 above.

181. *Mouse.* For its use as a term of endearment, cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 19 and *T. N.* i. 5. 69. See also Burton, *Anat. of Melancholy:* "pleasant names may be invented, bird, mouse, lamb, puss, pigeon, etc."

182. *Reechy.* Dirty. Cf. *Much Ado*, iii. 3. 143: "the reechy painting;" and *Cor.* ii. 1. 225: "her reechy neck." The word is only another form of *reeky*, soiled with smoke or *reek* (cf. *M. W.* iii. 3. 86).

183. *Paddling.* Cf. *W. T.* i. 2. 115 and *Oth.* ii. 1. 259.

184. *Ravel out.* Unravel, disentangle. Cf. *Rich II.* iv. 1. 228: "Must I ravel out My weav'd-up folly?" *Ravel* = tangle in *T. G. of V.* iii. 2. 52 and *Macb.* ii. 2. 37.

185. *Essentially am not.* Am not essentially or really.

187. *For who*, etc. Spoken ironically.

188. *Paddock.* Toad; as in *Macb.* i. 1. 9. *Gib.* = tom-cat. Coles has "*Gib*, a contraction for *Gilbert*," and "a Gib-cat, *catus*, *felis mas*." The female cat was called *Graymalkin* or *Grimalkin*; *Malkin* being originally a diminutive of *Mall* (Moll) or *Mary*. We find *gib-cat* in 1 *Hen. IV.* i. 2. 83.

189. *Concernings.* Concerns; as in *M. for M.* i. 1. 57.

191–193. *Unpeg the basket*, etc. The reference is to some old story that has not come down to us; perhaps also alluded to by Sir John Suckling in one of his letters: "It is the story of the jackanapes and the partridges; thou starest after a beauty till it be lost to thee, and then let'st out another, and starest after that till it is gone too."

193. *Conclusions.* Experiments. Cf. *R. of L.* 1160:—

"That mother tries a merciless conclusion
Who, having two sweet babes, when death takes one,
Will slay the other and be nurse to none."

See also *A. and C.* v. 2. 358, *Cymb.* i. 5. 18, etc.

195. *Be thou assur'd*, etc. "The queen keeps her word, and is rewarded by the atoning punishment which befalls her in this world" (Moberly).

198. *I must to England.* We are not told how Hamlet came to know this. S. does not always take the trouble to make these little matters clear in the play.

204. *Enginer.* The folio has the word also in *T. and C.* ii. 3. 8 and *Oth.* ii. 1. 65; *engineer* not at all. Cf. *pioner* in i. 5. 163 above, *mutiner* (see on 83 above), etc.

205. *Hoist.* Schmidt makes this the participle of *hoise*, which occurs in *2 Hen. VI.* i. 1. 169: "We 'll quickly hoise Duke Humphrey from his seat;" and in *Rich. III.* iv. 4. 529: "Hoised sail." S. also uses the verb *hoist;* as in *Sonn.* 117. 7: "I have hoisted sail;" *A. and C.* iii. 10. 15: "Hoists sails and flies," etc. *Petar* is the same as *petard.* Cf. Cotgrave, *Fr. Dict.:* "Petart: a Petard, or Petarre; an Engine (made like a Bell, or Morter) herewith strong gates are burst open." For *'t shall go hard*, cf. *M. of V.* iii. 1. 75, *2 Hen. IV.* iii. 2. 354, etc.

209. *Packing.* Schmidt makes this = going off in a hurry. Cf. *send packing* in *1 Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 328, *Rich. III.* iii. 2. 63, etc. Wright explains it as "contriving, plotting" (with a play on the other sense); as in *T. of S.* v. 1. 121, etc.

210. *Guts.* Steevens gives examples to show that anciently this word was not so offensive to delicacy as at present. It is used by Lyly, "who made the first attempt to polish our language;" also by Stonyhurst in his translation of Virgil, and by Chapman in his *Iliad.* Halliwell-Phillipps says: "I have seen a letter, written about a century ago, in which a lady of rank, addressing a gentleman, speaks of her *guts* with the same nonchalance with which we

should now write *stomach*." On the adjective use of *neighbour*, cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 94, *A. Y. L.* iv. 3. 79, etc.

Staunton considers that this line was introduced merely to afford the player an excuse for removing the body. In the time of S. an actor was obliged not only to play two or more parts in the same drama, but to perform such servile offices as are now done by attendants of the stage. This explains Falstaff's clumsy and unseemly exploit of carrying off Harry Percy's body on his back. See also *R. and J.* iii. 1. 201, *Rich. II.* v. 5. 118, 119, 1 *Hen. IV.* v. 4. 160, *Rich. III.* i. 4. 287, 288, *Lear*, iv. 6. 280–282, *J. C.* iii. 2. 261, etc.

214. *To draw.* Cf. iii. 2. 339 above.

ACT IV

SCENE I. — 1. *Profound.* The king uses *profound* equivocally, as it may mean *deep* literally and *deep* in significance, and upon the latter meaning *translate* bears (Corson). For the accent, see on i. 4. 52 above.

7. *Mad.* "The queen both follows her son's injunction in keeping up the belief in his madness, and, with maternal ingenuity, makes it the excuse for his rash deed" (Clarke).

10. *Whips.* For the omission of the subject, cf. iii. 1. 8 above.

11. *Brainish.* Brainsick; used by S. nowhere else.

16. *Answer'd.* Explained, accounted for. Cf. iii. 4. 174 above.

18. *Kept short.* Kept under control. *Out of haunt* = out of company. Cf. *A Y. L.* ii. 1. 15 and *A. and C.* iv. 14. 54.

22. *Divulging.* Being divulged, becoming known.

24. *Apart.* Aside. Cf. *Oth.* ii. 3. 391: "to draw the Moor apart," etc. See also iv. 5. 185 below.

25. *Ore.* Apparently used by S. only of gold. Cf. *A. W.* iii. 6. 40: "this counterfeit lump of ore."

26. *Mineral.* Mine, or metallic vein in a mine. Cf. Hall,

Satires, vi. 148: "fired brimstone in a minerall." Elsewhere in S. it means a poisonous mineral. See *Oth.* i. 2. 73, ii. 1. 306, and *Cymb.* v. 5. 50.

27. *Weeps.* "Either this is an entire invention of the queen, or Hamlet's mockeries had been succeeded by sorrow" (Moberly).

36. *Speak fair.* Speak gently or kindly. Cf. *C. of E.* iii. 2. 11, *Rich. II.* iii. 3. 128, etc. So also "speak *him* fair," "speak *you* fair," etc.: as in *C. of E.* iv. 2. 16, *M. N. D.* ii. 1. 199, etc.

40. *Untimely.* Often used adverbially; as in *Macb.* v. 8. 16, *R. and J.* iii. 1. 123, v. 3. 258, etc.

41. *O'er the world's diameter.* "To the ends of the earth."

42. *Blank.* The *white* mark in the centre of a target. Cf. *W. T.* ii. 3. 5, *Lear*, i. 1. 161, etc.

44. *Woundless air.* Cf. i. 1. 145 above: "as the air invulnerable."

SCENE II. — 6. *Compounded it with dust.* Cf. *Sonn.* 71. 10: "When I perhaps compounded am with clay." See also 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 5. 116.

12. *Demanded of.* Questioned by. Cf. *Temp.* i. 2. 139: "Well demanded;" *Oth.* v. 2. 301: "Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil, Why," etc.

13. *Replication.* Reply. Cf. *L. L. L.* iv. 2. 15, *J. C.* i. 1. 51, and *L. C.* 122.

16. *Countenance.* Patronage, favour. Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 2. 13:

> "The man that sits within a monarch's heart,
> And ripens in the sunshine of his favour,
> Would he abuse the countenance of the king," etc.

17. *Authorities.* Attributes or offices of authority. Cf. *M. for M.* iv. 4. 6, *Lear*, i. 3. 17, etc.

24. *A knavish speech*, etc. A proverb since the time of S., but not known to have been such earlier (Steevens).

28. *The body*, etc. If this is not meant to be nonsense, the commentators have made nothing else of it.

31. *Hide fox*, etc. "There is a play among children thus called" (Hanmer). Moberly says: "Hamlet sheathes his sword, and, as if he were playing hide-and-seek, cries, 'now the fox is hid: let all go after him.'" For *fox* = sword, see *Hen. V.* iv. 4. 9. The figure of a fox was often engraved on blades.

Scene III. — 6. *Scourge.* Punishment; as in *Rich. III.* i. 4. 50, etc.

9. *Deliberate pause.* A matter of deliberate arrangement. Cf. iii. 3. 42 above.

21. *Convocation of politic worms.* "Holding congress over the great politician;" perhaps alluding, as some think, to the Imperial Diets held at Worms. For *your*, see on i. 5. 167, and cf. iii. 2. 108 above. See also v. 1. 178 below: "your water," etc.

29. *Eat.* The regular form of the participle in S.

33. *Progress.* A royal journey of state was always so called. Cf. 2 *Hen. VI.* i. 4. 76: "The king is now in progress towards Saint Alban's."

35. *Send thither to see.* For you cannot go yourself, as you can to "the other place."

43. *Tender.* Regard, cherish. Cf. i. 3. 107 above.

45. *With fiery quickness.* In hot haste.

47. *Tend.* Attend, wait. Cf. i. 3. 83 above.

56. *At foot.* At his heels. Schmidt compares *A. and C.* i. 5. 44 and ii. 2. 160.

59. *Leans on.* Depends on; as in 2 *Hen. IV.* i. 1. 164, *T. and C.* iii. 3. 85, etc. There is a play upon the expression in *M. for M.* ii. 1. 49.

60. *Hold'st at aught.* Dost value at all.

61. *As.* For so. Cf. iv. 7. 157 and v. 2. 343 below.

63. *Free.* Willing, ready; no longer enforced by the Danish sword. Or we may say that *free awe pays homage* = awe pays free homage; an example of the "transposition of epithets."

64. *Coldly set.* Regard with indifference. Cf. "set me light"

= esteem me lightly, in *Sonn.* 88. 1 and "sets it light" in *Rich. II.* i. 3. 293.

66. *Conjuring.* Accented on either syllable by S. without regard to the meaning. Cf. v. 1. 265 below.

67. *Present.* Instant. Cf. *R. of L.* 1263, 1307, *M. for M.* ii. 4. 152, iv. 2. 171, 223, etc. See on *presently*, ii. 2. 170 above.

68. *Hectic.* Cf. Cotgrave, *Fr. Dict.*: "Hectique: Sicke of an Hectick, or continuall Feauer." S. uses the word only here.

70. *Haps.* Cf. *Much Ado*, iii. 1. 105: "loving goes by haps," etc.

SCENE IV.—6. *In his eye.* In his presence; especially used of the royal presence. Cf. *A. and C.* ii. 2. 212: "tended her i' the eyes," etc. Steevens quotes *The Establishment of the Household of Prince Henry*, 1610: "all such as doe service in the Prince's eye;" and *The Regulations for the Queen's Household*, 1027: "Such as doe service in the Queen's eye." Furness refers to iv. 7. 45 below.

8. *Softly.* Slowly, gently; probably addressed to his soldiers. Cf. *J. C.* v. 1. 16: "Octavius, lead your battle softly on," etc.

9. *Powers.* Troops. Both the singular and the plural are used in this sense (cf. *force* and *forces*).

11. *How purpos'd?* Having what purpose or destination? Cf. *Lear*, ii. 4. 296: "So am I purpos'd," etc.

14. *Norway.* The king of Norway. See on i. 2. 125 above.

15. *The main.* The chief power; or, perhaps, the country as a whole. Cf. *T. and C.* ii. 3. 273: "all our main of power," etc.

20. *Five ducats, five.* The repetition of *five* is contemptuous = "only five." *Farm* = rent, or lease. S. uses the verb only here and in *Rich. II.* i. 4. 45: "to farm our royal realm."

22. *Ranker.* More abundant.

26. *Debate the question* = decide the question.

27. *Imposthume.* Inward sore or abscess. Cf. *V. and A.* 743 and *T. and C.* v. 1. 24. Caldecott quotes 1 *Hen. IV.* iv. 2. 32: "the cankers of a calm world and long peace."

34. *Market of his time.* That for which he sells his time.

36. *Such large discourse*, etc. "Such latitude of comprehension, such power of reviewing the past and anticipating the future" (Johnson).

39. *Fust.* To grow mouldy or "fusty" (*T. and C.* i. 3. 161, ii. 1. 111, and *Cor.* i. 9. 7). S. uses the verb nowhere else.

41. *Of.* In consequence of. *Event* = issue; as in 50 below.

44. *To do.* This use of the active infinitive is still good English.

45. *Sith.* See on ii. 2. 6 above.

46. *Gross.* Palpable, obvious. Cf. 1. *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 250: "gross as a mountain, open, palpable."

47. *Charge.* Cost, expense. Cf. *K. John*, i. 1. 49: "This expedition's charge," etc.

49. *Puff'd.* Inspired.

50. *Makes mouths*, etc. Scorns the uncertainties of the war. For *makes mouths*, cf. *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 238 and *Lear*, iii. 2. 36.

54. *Is not*, etc. The *not* modifies *is*, as Furness notes: "To stir without great argument, upon every trifling occasion, is not the attribute of greatness; . . . but it *is* the attribute of greatness to stir instantly and at a trifle when the heart is touched." For *argument* = matter in dispute, cf. *Hen. V.* iv. 1. 150, etc.

58. *My reason and my blood.* See on iii. 2. 70: "blood and judgment."

61. *Trick of fame.* Trifling honour. Cf. *Cor.* iv. 4. 21: "Some trick [that is, trifle] not worth an egg." On the passage, cf. *A. Y. L.* ii. 7. 152:—

> "Seeking the bubble reputation
> Even in the cannon's mouth."

63. *Whereon*, etc. That is, not large enough to hold the armies that fight for it.

64. *Continent.* Receptacle, that which *contains*. Cf. *M. N. D* ii. 1. 92:—

> "Have every pelting river made so proud
> That they have overborn their continents;"

A. and C. iv. 14. 40: "Heart, once be stronger than thy continent," etc. Reed quotes Bacon, *Adv. of L.*: "and if there be no fulness, then is the continent greater than the content."

SCENE V. — 2. *Distract.* See on *deject*, iii. 1. 159.

6. *Spurns.* Kicks. Cf. *C. of E.* ii. 1. 83: "That like a foot ball you do spurn me thus," etc. *Enviously* = angrily, spitefully. So *envious* often = spiteful, and *envy* = malice, spite.

8. *Unshaped.* Formless, confused. Cf. *M. for M.* iv. 4. 23: "This deed unshapes me quite;" that is, deranges or confuses me.

9. *To collection.* To endeavour to collect some meaning from it. *Aim* = guess; as in *T. G. of V.* iii. 1. 45, *T. of S.* ii. 1. 237, etc.

11–13. *Which, as her winks*, etc. "The general sense of this ill-expressed sentence is more easily understood than paraphrased. The speaker is afraid of committing himself to any definite statement. If he had spoken out he would have said, 'Her words and gestures lead one to infer that some great misfortune has happened to her'" (Wright).

15. *Ill-breeding* = "hatching mischief" (Schmidt).

18. *Toy.* Trifle. Cf. 1 *Hen. VI.* iv. 1. 145: "a toy, a thing of no regard," etc. *Amiss* = misfortune, disaster; also used as a noun in *Sonn.* 35. 7 and 151. 3.

19. *Jealousy.* Suspicion; as in ii. 1. 113 above. The meaning is, Guilt is so full of suspicion that it betrays itself in fearing to be betrayed.

25. *Cockle-hat.* The cockle-shell in the hat was the badge of a pilgrim.

26. *Shoon.* This plural was archaic in the time of S. He puts it in the mouth of Cade, 2 *Hen. VI.* iv. 2. 195.

37. *Larded.* Garnished. Cf. v. 2. 20 below. See also *M. W.* iv. 6. 14, *T. and C.* v. 1. 63, etc.

41. *God 'ield you!* God yield or reward you. Cf. *A. Y. L.* iii. 3. 76, *Macb.* i. 6. 13, etc.

The owl, etc. According to Douce, there is a story current in

Gloucestershire that our Saviour went into a baker's shop to ask for bread. The mistress of the shop would have given him all he wanted, but was reprimanded by her daughter, who for her lack of charity was transformed into an owl.

44. *Conceit.* Imagination; as in iii. 4. 112 above.

49. *And I*, etc. The first girl seen by a man on the morning of this day was considered his Valentine or true-love. The custom continued until the eighteenth century, and is graphically alluded to by Gay.

61. *When sorrows come*, etc. That is, "misfortunes never come single." *Spies* = scouts sent in advance of the main army.

64. *Remove.* See on *avouch*, i. 1. 57; and cf. *Lear*, ii. 4. 4, *A. and C.* i. 2. 203, etc.

66. *Greenly.* Foolishly. Cf. *Hen. V.* v. 2. 149: "look greenly." See also i. 3. 101 above.

67. *In hugger-mugger.* Secretly and hurriedly. Steevens quotes North's *Plutarch:* "Antonius thinking good . . . that his bodie should be honorably buried, and not in hugger-mugger." Malone cites Florio, *Ital. Dict.;* "Dinascoso, secretly, hiddenly, in hugger-mugger."

68. *Divided*, etc. Cf. v. 2. 116 below.

72. *Feeds on his wonder.* Is filled with doubt and amazement *Keeps himself in clouds* = is reserved and mysterious in his conduct.

73. *Buzzers.* Whisperers, talebearers (Schmidt); used by S. only here. Cf. the verb *buzz* = whisper, in *Rich. II.* ii. 1. 26, 3 *Hen. VI.* v. 6. 86, *Hen. VIII.* ii. 1. 148, etc.

75. *Wherein*, etc. "Wherein (that is, in which pestilent speeches) necessity, or the obligation of an accuser to support his charge, will nothing stick," etc. (Johnson).

78. *A murthering-piece.* A cannon loaded with case-shot. Steevens quotes Smith's *Sea Grammar*, 1627: "A case shot is any kinde of small bullets, nailes, old iron, or the like, to put into the case, to shoot out of the ordinances [ordnance; as in *Hen. V.* ii. 4. 126, etc.] or murderers."

80. *Switzers.* Swiss guards such as served in France, Spain, and Naples — the men whose fidelity to Louis XVI. on the terrible 10th of August is commemorated by the Lucerne lion. Malone quotes Nash's *Christ's Teares over Jerusalem*, 1594: "Law, logicke, and the Switzers, may be hired to fight for any body."

82. *Overpeering of his list.* Rising above (literally, looking over) its boundary. Cf. *M. of V.* i. 1. 12: "Do overpeer the petty traffickers;" 3 *Hen. VI.* v. 2. 14: "Whose top-branch overpeer'd Jove's spreading tree," etc. For *list*, cf. *Hen. V.* v. 2. 295: "confined within the weak list of a country's fashion;" *Oth.* iv. 1. 76: "Confine yourself but in a patient list," etc.

83. *Eats not*, etc. Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* i. 1. 47: "He seem'd in running to devour the way."

84. *Head.* Armed force; as in 1 *Hen. IV.* i. 3. 284: "To save our heads by raising of a head;" *Id.* iv. 4. 25: "a head Of gallant warriors," etc.

86. *As.* As if. Cf. iii. 4. 133 above.

88. *Of every word.* "Of everything that is to serve as a watch-word and shibboleth to the multitude" (Schmidt).

93. *Counter.* Hounds *run counter* when they trace the scent backwards. Turbervile, in his *Book of Hunting*, says: "When a hound hunteth backwards the same way that the chase is come, then we say he hunteth counter." Cf. *C. of E.* iv. 2. 39 and 2 *Hen. IV.* i. 2. 102.

99. *Calmly*, etc. Johnson inserts here the stage-direction, "*Laying hold on him.*" Cf. 105 below.

102. *Unsmirched.* Unstained, unsullied. Cf. *besmirch*, i. 3. 15 above; and *smirched* in *Hen. V.* iii. 3. 17, etc.

105. *Fear.* Fear for. See on i. 3. 51 above. Moberly remarks: "The king is truly royal where conscience does not stand in his way."

106. *There's such divinity*, etc. Boswell quotes from Chettle's *Englandes Mourning Garment* the following anecdote of Queen Elizabeth: While her majesty was on the river near Greenwich, a

shot was fired by accident which struck the royal barge, and hurt a waterman near her. "The French ambassador being amazed, and all crying Treason, Treason! yet she, with an undaunted spirit, came to the open place of the barge, and bad them never feare, for if the shot were made at her, they durst not shoote againe: such majestie had her presence, and such boldnesse her heart, that she despised all feare, and was, as all princes are or should be, so full of divine fulnesse, that guiltie mortalitie durst not beholde her but with dazzled eyes."

117. *Both the worlds.* This world and the next. Cf. *Macb.* iii. 2. 16, where the expression means heaven and earth.

119. *Throughly.* Thoroughly. *Through* and *thorough* were originally the same word, and S. uses them interchangeably; and so with *thoroughly* and *throughly*. Cf. *throughfares* in *M. of V.* ii. 7. 42.

120. *My will.* That is, only my own will.

124. *Is 't writ*, etc. Cf. i. 2. 222 above: "writ down in our duty," etc.

125. *Swoopstake.* "Sweepstakes is a game of cards in which a player may win all the stakes or take all the tricks" (Dowden).

128. *Thus wide.* Explained by a gesture. Cf. *J. C.* iv. 3. 26: "so much trash as may be grasped thus."

129. *Pelican.* The folio has "Politician." Caldecott quotes Dr. Sherwen: "By the pelican's dropping upon its breast its lower bill to enable its young to take from its capacious pouch, lined with a fine flesh-coloured skin, this appearance is, on feeding them, given." Rushton cites Lyly, *Euphues*: "the Pelicane, who stricketh bloud out of hir owne bodye to do others good." For other allusions to the same fable, see *Rich. II.* ii. 1. 126 and *Lear*, iii. 4. 77.

130. *Repast.* The verb is used by S. nowhere else.

133. *Sensibly.* Feelingly, as in *L. L. L.* iii. 1. 114.

138. *Virtue.* Power. Cf. *V. and A.* 1131: "Their virtue lost" (referring to eyes); and *L. L. L.* v. 2. 348: "The virtue of your eye."

144–146. *Nature is fine*, etc. Moberly paraphrases the passage thus: "Nature is so spiritualized by love that it sends its most precious functions one by one after dear ones lost, as instances or samples of itself, till none remain."

154. *Wheel.* Malone explains this as the spinning-wheel, at which the singer is supposed to be occupied. Cf. *T. N.* ii. 4. 45.

155. The story of *the false steward* to which Ophelia alludes has not come down to our day.

157. *Matter.* Sense, meaning. Cf. ii. 2. 95 above.

158. *Rosemary.* The symbol of remembrance, particularly used at weddings and funerals. Cf. *W. T.* iv. 3. 74 and *R. and J.* iv. 5. 79. Sir Thomas More says of it: "I lett it run alle over my garden walls, not onlie because my bees love it, but because tis the herb sacred to remembrance, and therefore to friendship; whence a sprig of it hath a dumb language that maketh it the chosen emblem at our funeral wakes and in our buriall grounds." Cf. Herrick, *The Rosemarie Branch*: —

> "Grow for two ends, it matters not at all,
> Be 't for my bridall or my buriall;"

and Dekker, *Wonderful Year*: "The rosemary that was washed in sweet water to set out the bridal, is now wet in tears to furnish her burial."

160. *For thoughts.* Because the name is from the Fr. *pensée*, thought. The flower is the *love-in-idleness* of *M. N. D.* ii. 1. 168 and *T. of S.* i. 1. 156. Spenser calls it by the old name *paunce.* Cf. *F. Q.* iii. 1. 36: —

> "Sweet Rosemaryes
> And fragrant violets, and Paunces trim;"

Id. iii. 11. 37: "The one a Paunce, the other a Sweet-breare;" and *Shep. Kal. Apr.*: —

> "The pretie Pawnce,
> And the Chevisaunce."

Milton (*Lycidas*, 144) speaks of it as "the pansy freak'd with jet."

161. *Document.* Lesson, precept; used by S. nowhere else. Cf. Spenser, *F. Q.* i. 10. 19: "And heavenly documents thereout did preach."

163. *Fennel.* Malone says: "Ophelia gives her fennel and columbines to the king. In *A Handfull of Pleasant Delites*, 1584, the former is thus mentioned: 'Fennel is for flatterers,' etc. See also Florio, *Ital. Dict.* 1598: 'Dare finocchio, to give fennel, . . . to flatter, to dissemble.'" The plant was supposed to have many virtues, which are well stated by Longfellow in *The Goblet of Life*: —

"Above the lowly plants it towers,
The fennel, with its yellow flowers,
And in an earlier age than ours
Was gifted with the wondrous powers,
Lost vision to restore.
It gave new strength and fearless mood;
And gladiators, fierce and rude,
Mingled it in their daily food;
And he who battled and subdued
A wreath of fennel wore."

Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 267: "and a' plays at quoits well, and eats conger and fennel."[1]

Columbines. Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 661: "That columbine." It was the emblem of cuckoldom on account of the horns of its nectaria. The *Caltha Poetarum*, 1599, speaks of it as "the blue cornuted columbine." It was also emblematic of forsaken lovers.

164. *Rue.* This she gives to the queen. It was "the symbol of sorry remembrance." Cf. *W. T.* iv. 4. 74 and *Rich. II.* iii. 4. 105. It was also called *herb of grace*, a name appropriate on Sunday, as Ophelia says. Cf. *A. W.* iv. 5. 18.

[1] Young readers may be interested in the fact that *ferule* is derived from the Latin *ferula* the name of the giant fennel, the stalks of which were used as "birches" by the Roman schoolmaster.

166. *With a difference.* Skeat explains the passage thus: "I offer you rue, which has two meanings: it is sometimes called *herb of grace*, and in that sense I take some for myself; but with a slight difference of spelling it means *ruth*, and in that respect it will do for you." He adds that the explanation is Shakespeare's own, and refers to *Rich. II.* iii. 4. 105.

Daisy. Cf. iv. 7. 168 below; also *L. L. L.* v. 2. 904 and *K. of L.* 395. *Daisied* occurs in *Cymb.* iv. 2. 398. It was the favourite flower of Chaucer. It does not appear to whom Ophelia gives the daisy; probably either to the king or queen. Henley quotes Greene, who calls it "the dessembling daisie."

167. *Violets.* Malone quotes a sonnet printed in 1584: "Violet is for faithfulnesse." Cf. i. 3. 7 above and v. 1. 249 below.

169. The song of *Bonny Sweet Robin* is found in Anthony Holborne's *Cittharn Schoole*, 1597, in William Ballet's *Lute Book*, and in many other books and manuscripts of the time. In *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, ii. 1, the jailer's daughter, when mad, says: "I can sing *The Broom* and *Bonny Robin*."

170. *Thought.* Anxiety, trouble. Cf. iii. 1. 85 above. *Passion* = violent sorrow; as in *T. A.* i. 1. 106: "A mother's tears in passion for her son," etc. Cf. ii. 2. 531 above.

171. *Favour.* Attractiveness. Cf. *Oth.* iv. 3. 21: "even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns . . . have grace and favour in them."

181. *God ha' mercy.* The folio has "Gramercy;" perhaps to avoid the introduction of the name of God. See on ii. 1. 76 above.

184. *Commune.* Accented on the first syllable by S., except perhaps in *W. T.* ii. 1. 162.

186. *Of whom*, etc. That is, "of your wisest friends, whom you will."

189. *Touch'd.* That is, accessory to the deed.

195. *His means of death.* The means of his death. For the accent of *obscure*, see on i. 4. 52 above.

196. *Hatchment.* An armorial escutcheon used at funerals.

197. *Ostentation.* Also used of funeral pomp in *Much Ado*, iv. 1. 207: "a mourning ostentation."

199. *That.* For the omission of *so*, cf. iv. 7. 146 below.

SCENE VI. — 1. *What.* Equivalent, as often, to *who*. Cf. *Temp.* v. 1. 85, *M. for M.* ii. 1. 62, iv. 2. 132, iv. 3. 27, v. 1. 472, etc.

11. *Let to know.* Made to know.

13. *Overlooked.* Looked over, perused. Cf. *Hen. V.* ii. 4. 90: "Willing you overlook this pedigree." *Means* = means of access, introduction.

14. *Two days old at sea.* Cf. *M. for M.* iv. 2. 135: "one that is a prisoner nine years old;" *C. of E.* i. 1. 45: "my absence was not six months old;" *Id.* ii. 2. 150: "In Ephesus I am but two hours old," etc.

15. *Appointment.* Equipment; as in *K. John*, ii. 1. 296, etc.

17. *Compelled.* Enforced, involuntary. Cf. *R. of L.* 1708: "this compelled stain;" *M. for M.* ii. 4. 57: "our compell'd sins," etc.

19. *Thieves of mercy.* Merciful thieves. Cf. i. 2. 4 above: "brow of woe," etc.

20. *But they knew what they did.* This has been thought to prove that the capture of Hamlet was not accidental, but a prearranged plan of his own. Clearly, however, it does not refer to the capture, but to the "mercy" shown him afterwards, and it is explained by what follows: "I am to do a good turn for *them*." Hamlet saw how he could turn the accident to account, and had persuaded the pirates to assist him in the plan. What Hamlet says in iii. 4. 202–207 has been quoted in proof of this supposed counterplot; but all that he meant there was that he would find some way to circumvent his enemies. He had no plan formed, but felt that he was a match for them in craft. "Let it work," he says, "for it shall go hard but I will manage to countermine them." His own account (in v. 2) of the adventure with the pirates refutes the notion that it was a device of his own.

22. *As thou wouldst fly death.* That is, wouldst fly death *with*. Similar ellipses with *as* are not uncommon.

24. *For the bore*, etc. A figure taken from the calibre of a gun.

Scene VII. — 3. *Sith.* See on ii. 2. 6 above.

7. *Crimeful.* Criminal; as in *R. of L.* 970: "To make him curse this cursed crimeful night."

10. *Unsinew'd.* Weak. Cf. *sinewed* (= strengthened) in *K. John*, v. 7. 88, and *insinewed* (= joined in sinews, allied) in 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 1. 172.

13. *Be it either which.* Whichever it be.

14. *Conjunctive.* Conjoined, closely united; as in *Oth.* i. 3. 374: "conjunctive in our revenge."

15. *Sphere.* Alluding to the old Ptolemaic theory that the heavenly bodies were set in crystal spheres, by the revolution of which they were carried round. Cf. *Temp.* ii. 1. 183, *M. N. D.* ii. 1. 7. 153, iii. 2. 61, *K. John*, v. 7. 74, *T. and C.* i. 3. 90, etc. See also Milton, *Hymn on Nativity*, 125 fol.: "Ring out, ye crystal spheres," etc.

17. *Count.* Account, trial. It is the same as *compt.* Cf. *Oth.* v. 2. 273: "when we shall meet at compt;" that is, at the judgment-day.

18. *General gender.* The common people. S. uses the word also in *Oth.* i. 3. 326: "one gender of herbs;" and in *The Phœnix and the Turtle*, 18: "thy sable gender." Cf. "the general," ii. 2. 449 above.

20. *The spring*, etc. According to Harrison (*Descrip. of England*) the baths of King's Newnham, in Warwickshire, had this property, as S. may have known.

21. *Convert his gyves*, etc. Were I to put him in fetters, it would only give him more general favour.

22. *Loud a wind.* Steevens quotes Ascham, *Toxophilus:* "Weake bowes and lyghte shaftes can not stande in a rough wynde."

24. *And not where.* And not *gone* where.

27. *If praises,* etc. "If I may praise what has been, but is now to be found no more" (Johnson).

28. *Stood challenger,* etc. "Challenged all the age to deny her perfection" (Furness).

30. *Sleeps.* See on *loves,* i. 1. 173.

32. *Shook.* S. generally has *shook* for both past tense and participle, but sometimes *shaked* (cf. *Temp.* ii 1. 319, *Hen. V.* ii. 1. 124, etc.). *Shaken* occurs five times.

45. *Your kingly eyes.* See on iv. 4. 6 above.

46. *Sudden,* etc. "Sudden, and even more strange than sudden."

49. *Abuse.* Deception, delusion. Cf. *M. for M.* v. 1. 205: "a strange abuse;" also the use of the verb in ii. 2. 621 above.

50. *Character.* Handwriting. Cf. *W. T.* v. 2. 38: "the letters of Antigonus found with it which they know to be his character," etc. For the accent, see on i. 3. 59 above.

56. *Didest.* The folio has "diddest," the quartos "didst." *Didest* is not found elsewhere in S.

57. *As how,* etc. We should expect "How should it *not* be so?" but S. is elsewhere inexact in repeating and omitting the negative.

58. *Ay.* A dissyllable, as in ii. 1. 36 above. Cf. *T. of S.* iv. 4. 2, *Cor.* v. 3. 125, and *Lear,* ii. 1. 111.

61. *Checking at.* A term in falconry, applied to a hawk when she forsakes her proper game and follows some other. Cf. *T. N.* ii. v. 124 and iii. 1. 71.

66. *Uncharge.* Acquit of blame, not accuse. So *unbless* = not bless, neglect to bless, in *Sonn.* 3. 4. *Practice* = artifice, plot; as in 137 and v. 2. 324 below.

69. *Falls.* Happens. Cf. *M. N. D.* v. 1. 188: "it will fall pat as I told you," etc.

72. *Your sum of parts.* All your "qualities" or gifts. Cf. v. 2. 110 below: "the continent of what part a gentleman would see."

73. *Pluck.* A favourite word with S. For *pluck from* = draw from, cf. *Sonn.* 14. 1, *M. of V.* iv. 1. 30, *Hen. V.* iv. chor. 42, *Cor.* ii. 3. 200, etc.

75. *Siege.* Rank; literally, seat (*M. for M.* iv. 2. 101). Cf. *Oth.* i. 2. 22: "From men of royal siege."

79. *Sables.* See on iii. 2. 123 above; and for *weeds* = robes, dress, cf. *M. N. D.* ii. 2. 71, etc.

80. *Health.* Malone and others explain this as = care for health, such as characterizes elderly men; but some make it = prosperity. Cf. i. 3. 21 above and v. 2. 21 below; also *L. L. L.* ii. 1. 178, etc. Furness thinks that *health* may refer to *careless livery*, and *graveness* to *sables* and *weeds*; the figure being like that in iii. 1. 155 above, *Macb.* i. 3. 60, ii. 3. 69, etc.

83. *Can.* For this absolute use of *can*, cf. v. 2. 327 below. "I can no more." See also iii. 3. 65.

86. *As.* As if; a common ellipsis. *Incorps'd* = "incorporate" (*C. of E.* ii. 2. 124, *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 208, etc.). Steevens quotes Sidney, *Arcadia*: "As if, Centaur-like, he had been one peece with the horse."

87. *Topp'd.* Overtopped, surpassed; as in *Macb.* iv. 3. 57: "to top Macbeth," etc.

88. *Forgery.* Invention (Schmidt). "I could not contrive so many proofs of dexterity as he could perform" (Johnson).

91. *Lamond.* The quartos have "Lamord," the folio "Lamound." Mr. C. E. Brown thinks there may be an allusion to Pietro Monte (whose name is given in English of the time as "Peter Mount"), a famous cavalier and swordsman, the instructor of Louis the Seventh's Master of Horse.

92. *Brooch.* An ornamental buckle for the hat. Cf. *A. W.* i. 1. 171, etc.

94. *Confession.* Implying that Lamond would not willingly acknowledge the superiority of Laertes.

95. *Such a masterly report.* Such a report of mastership.

96. *Defence.* That is, the *science* of defence.

99. *Scrimers.* Fencers (Fr. *escrimeur*) ; a word not found elsewhere.

110. *Love is begun,* etc. That is, love is not innate, and experience shows that it is not immutable. On *proof,* cf. *J. C.* ii. 1. 21 : "'t is a common proof," etc. See also iii. 2. 163 above.

115. *A like.* A uniform, the same. *Still* = always, constantly; as in ii. 2. 42 above.

116. *Plurisy.* Plethora. The dramatic writers of that time frequently call a fulness of blood a *plurisy,* as if the word came from *plus, pluris.* Cf. Massinger, *The Picture,* iv. 2 : "A plurisy of ill blood you must let out ; " and *Unnatural Combat,* iv. 1 : "Thy plurisy of goodness is thy ill," etc.

117. *Too-much.* Cf. *Lear,* v. 3. 206 : "To amplify too-much would make much more."

121. *Spendthrift sigh.* A wasting sigh ; alluding to the old notion that every sigh caused the loss of a drop of blood from the heart. Cf. *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 97 : "With sighs of love that costs the fresh blood dear," etc.

122. *To the quick.* Cf. ii. 2. 615 above.

126. *Sanctuarize.* Be a sanctuary to, or protect from punishment. Cf. *C. of E.* v. 1. 94 : —

> "he took this place for sanctuary,
> And it shall privilege him from your hands."

For similar allusions, see 3 *Hen. VI.* iv. 4. 31, *Rich. III.* ii. 4. 66, iii. 1. 28, 42, iv. 1. 94, etc.

130. *Put on those shall,* etc. For *put on* = instigate, cf. v. 2. 390 below : "deaths put on by cunning," etc. ; and for the omission of the relative, see on iv. 6. 24 above.

133. *Remiss.* Careless. Cf. 1 *Hen. VI.* iv. 3. 29 : "while remiss traitors sleep."

134. *Contriving.* In a bad sense = plotting ; as in *J. C.* ii. 3. 16, *Rich. II.* i. 3. 189, *Hen. V.* iv. 1. 171, etc.

135. *Peruse.* Examine closely. Cf. *perusal,* ii. 1. 90 above

137. *Unbated.* Not blunted, as foils are by a button fixed to the end. In *M. of V.* ii. 6. 11, it means unabated. For *bate* = to blunt, see *L. L. L.* i. 1. 6; and for *bateless* = not to be blunted, *R. of L.* 9. *A pass of practice* = a treacherous thrust; or, possibly, a pass in which you are well practised. For *practice* in the former sense, cf. 66 above.

138. *I will do 't*, etc. "Laertes shows by his horrid suggestion of the poison how little need there was for the king to prepare the temptation as carefully as he had done" (Moberly).

140. *Mountebank.* Quack. Cf. *Oth.* i. 3. 61: "medicines bought of mountebanks," etc. Cf. Cotgrave, *French Dict.* (under *charlatan*): "A Mountebanke, a cousening drug-seller, a pratling quack-saluer."

141. *Mortal.* Deadly; as often.

143. *Simples.* Herbs (as the ingredients of a compound). Cf. *R. of L.* 530, *A. Y. L.* iv. 1. 16, *R. and J.* v. 1. 40, etc.

144. *Under the moon.* On the earth. Cf. *Lear*, iv. 6. 26, *A. and C.* iv. 15. 68, etc.

146. *Contagion.* Poison; the abstract for the concrete, like *unction* = ointment. *That* = *so* that, as in iv. 5. 199 above.

149. *May fit us*, etc. May enable us to act our part.

150. *And that.* And if. So *and that* = and when, in 158 below. *Look through* = show itself through, appear through.

153. *If this*, etc. A metaphor taken from the testing of fire-arms or cannon, which may burst in the process.

154. *Your cunnings.* Your respective skill. Cf. ii. 2. 427, 577 above.

157. *As.* For so. See on iv. 3. 61 above.

159. *For the nonce.* For the occasion. Cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* i. 2. 201: "cases of buckram for the nonce," etc.

160. *Stuck.* Thrust; "more properly *stock*, an abbreviation of *stoccata*" (Dyce). Cf. *T. N.* iii. 4. 303: "he gives me the stuck."

162. *One woe*, etc. Cf. iv. 5. 61 above: "When sorrows come," etc.

165. *There is*, etc. Furness quotes Campbell: "The queen was affected after a fashion by the picturesque mode of Ophelia's death, and takes more pleasure in describing it than any one would who really had a heart." Perhaps; but cf. iv. 5. 27, 36, and particularly v. 1. 252 fol.

Aslant. Beisley says: "This willow, the *Salix alba*, grows on the banks of most of our small streams, particularly the Avon, near Stratford, and from the looseness of the soil the trees partly lose their hold, and bend 'aslant' the stream."

166. *Hoar.* Willow leaves are silvery-grey, or *hoary*, on the under side, which is reflected in the water.

168. *Crow-flowers.* According to Ellacombe, in the time of S. the name was applied to the "Ragged Robin" (*Lychnis flosculi*). *Long purples*, according to the same authority, are "the common purple orchises of the woods and meadows." The name *dead-men's-fingers* was due to the palmated roots of some species.

169. *Liberal.* Free-spoken; as in *Rich. II.* ii. 1. 229: "a liberal tongue;" and *Oth.* v. 2. 220: "No, I will speak as liberal as the north." Elsewhere, it means wanton, licentious; as in *Much Ado*, iv. 1. 93, *M. of V.* ii. 2. 194, etc. It may have that sense here. The old *Herbals* give more than one "grosser name" for the flower.

170. *Cold.* Chaste; as in *Temp.* iv. 1. 66: "To make cold nymphs chaste crowns," etc.

172. *Sliver.* Here = a small branch; properly one broken off. Cf. the *verb* in *Macb.* iv. 1. 28.

176. *Which time.* The preposition omitted, as often in adverbial expressions of time.

177. *Incapable.* Insensible. See on iii. 4. 125 above.

178. *Native.* Cf. i. 2. 47 above. *Indued* = fitted, suited. Cf. *Oth.* iii. 1. 146:—

> "For let our finger ache, and it indues
> Our other healthful members even to that sense
> Of pain;"

that is, imparts to them the feeling of the same pain. In *Hen. V.* ii. 2. 139, "best indued" = best endowed.

181. *Poor wretch.* Cf. ii. 2. 168 above.

186. *Trick.* Habit. Cf. *A. and C.* v. 2. 75: "Is 't not your trick?" 2 *Hen. IV.* i. 2. 240: "the trick of our English nation," etc.

188. *The woman.* Cf. *Hen. V.* iv. 6. 31: —

> "But I had not so much of man in me,
> And all the mother came into mine eyes
> And gave me up to tears."

See also *T. N.* ii. 1. 41 and *Hen. VIII.* iii. 2. 431.

190. *Douts.* That is, *does out*, extinguishes; as in the only other passage in which S. uses the word, *Hen. V.* iv. 2. 11: "And dout them with superfluous courage."

ACT V

SCENE I. — 4. *Straight.* Probably = immediately; as in ii. 2. 443 and iii. 4. 1 above. Johnson says: "Make her grave from east to west, in a direct line, parallel with the church; not from north to south, athwart the regular line." *Crowner* = coroner.

9. *Offendendo.* The clown's blunder for *defendendo;* as *argal* in 12 is his corruption of *ergo.*

17. *Nill.* Will not. Cf. *Per.* iii. prol. 55: "I nill relate;" and Latimer, *Sermons:* "Such men should be witnesses — will they nill they."

23. *Crowner's quest law.* Sir John Hawkins suspects that S. here meant to ridicule a case reported by Plowden. Sir James Hales had drowned himself in a fit of insanity, and the legal question was whether his lease was thereby forfeited to the Crown. Much subtlety was expended in finding out whether Sir James was the *agent* or the *patient,* that is, whether *he went to the water* or

the water came to him. The following is part of the argument: "Sir James Hales was dead, and how came he to his death? It may be answered, by drowning; and who drowned him? Sir James Hales; and when did he drown him? In his lifetime. So that Sir James Hales being alive caused Sir James Hales to die, and the act of the living man was the death of the dead man. And then for this offence it is reasonable to punish the living man who committed the offence, and not the dead man. But how can he be said to be punished alive when the punishment comes after death?"

27. *Say'st.* That is, well, or to the purpose. Cf. *T. G. of V.* ii. 4. 29: "You have said, sir." See also *T. N.* iii. 1. 12, *Oth.* iv. 2. 204, and *A. and C.* ii. 6. 113.

30. *Even-Christian.* Fellow-Christian. Cf. Sir Thomas More: "to fighte against their even Christen." Similar expressions are "even-servant" (fellow-servant), "evene-caytif" (fellow-prisoner), etc.

32. *Hold up.* Follow up, continue. Cf. *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 239: "hold the sweet jest up;" 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 2. 48: "And heir from heir shall hold this quarrel up," etc.

33. *A gentleman.* Douce says that Gerard Leigh, one of the oldest writers on heraldry, speaks of "Jesus Christ, a gentleman of great lineage, and King of the Jews;" and again: "the second man that was born was a gentleman, whose name was Abell. I say a gentleman both of vertue and lignage, with whose sacrifice God was much pleased. His brother Cain was ungentle, for he offered God the worst of his fruites."

40. *Confess thyself.* — "And be hanged," the Clown would have said — a slang expression of the time. Cf. *Oth.* iv. 1. 38 and *T. of A.* i. 2. 22.

41. *Go to.* Come! a common phrase of exhortation or reproof. Cf. *Temp.* v. i. 297, etc.

42. *What.* Who. See on iv. 6. 1 above.

53. *Unyoke.* That is, your day's work is done.

56. *Mass.* "By the mass" (ii. 1. 50 above).

61. *Yaughan.* The word is apparently meant as the name of an alehouse-keeper. Mr. C. E. Browne says that it is a common Welsh name, and may have been that of some Welsh tavern-keeper near the theatre.

62. *Stoup.* A drinking-cup. Cf. v. 2. 274 below; also *T. N.* ii. 3. 14, 129, and *Oth.* ii. 3. 30.

63. *In youth*, etc. The clown sings some disjointed lines of a song by Lord Vaux, entitled "The aged lover renounceth love." It was printed in a collection of "Songes and Sonnettes," published by Tottel in 1557. The following are the stanzas that are of interest here:

"I lothe that I did loue,
In youth that I thought swete:
As time requires for my behoue
Me thinkes they are not mete.
* * * * *
For age with stelyng steppes,
Hath clawed me with his cowche [crowch],
And lusty life away she leapes,
As there had bene none such.
* * * * *
A pikeax and a spade
And eke a shrowdyng shete,
A house of claye for to be made,
For such a gest most mete.
* * * * *
For beauty with her bande
These croked cares hath wrought:
And shipped me into the lande,
From whence I first was brought."

The *O!* and *ah!* form no part of the song, but are ejaculations due to the Clown's hard labour.

69. *Property of easiness.* An easy property, an easy thing for him. Cf. iv. 6. 19 above: "thieves of mercy."

72. *Daintier.* Nicer, more delicate. Cf. *L. L. L.* iv. 3. 339, etc.

75. *Intil.* Into; an old form used by Chaucer.

78. *Jowls.* Knocks. Cf. *A. W.* i. 3. 58: "They may jowl horns together."

80. *Politician.* A plotter, a schemer for his own advantage; as in 1 *Hen. IV.* i. 3. 241, and *T. N.* iii. 2. 34.

81. *O'er-reaches.* Has the better of.

86. *That praised,* etc. Steevens compares *T. of A.* i. 2. 216 fol.

91. *Mazzard.* The head (contemptuous). Cf. *Oth.* ii. 3. 155: "I 'll knock you over the mazzard."

92. *Revolution.* Change of fortune. Cf. *A. and C.* i. 2. 129:—

> "the present pleasure,
> By revolution lowering, does become
> The opposite of itself."

93. *Trick* = "knack, faculty" (Caldecott).

94. *Loggats.* A game in which *loggats,* or small logs, are thrown at a mark. I have seen a similar game played in some parts of New England under the name of "loggerheads."

97. *For and.* Equivalent to "And eke" in the song as given above.

98. *For to.* See on iii. 1. 171 above.

101. *Quiddits.* Subtleties or nice distinctions of logic and law. Overbury, in his *Characters,* speaks of the pettifogger who "makes his will in form of a law-case, full of quiddits." *Quillets* means much the same. Cf. *L. L. L.* iv. 3. 288: "Some tricks, some quillets, how to cheat the devil;" 1 *Hen. VII.* ii. 4. 17: "these nice sharp quillets of the law," etc.

108. *The fine of his fines.* The end of all his fines; a play upon the word. We have *fine* = end in ii. 2. 69 and iv. 7. 132 above.

112. *A pair of indentures.* Agreements made out in duplicate, of which each party kept one. They were written on one sheet, which was cut in two in a crooked or *indented* line, in order that the fitting of the two parts might prove the genuineness of both.

114. *Box.* Alluding to the boxes in which attorneys keep their

deeds. *Inheritor* here = owner, possessor; as in *L. L. L.* ii. 1. 5 and *Rich. III.* iv. 3. 34.

119. *Assurance.* Safety, security; with a play on the legal sense of "conveyance of lands by deed."

124. *Thine.* "Note that throughout this dialogue Hamlet addresses the Clown in the second person singular, while the Clown replies in the second person plural" (Furness).

130. *Quick.* Opposed to *dead*, as in 260 below. Cf. *Acts*, x 42, etc.

141. *Absolute.* Positive, certain; as in *Macb.* iii. 6. 40, *Cor.* iii. 1. 90, iii. 2. 39, etc. *By the card* = with the utmost precision. The *card* is probably the *chart* of the navigator.

144. *Picked.* Spruce, nice. Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 1. 14: "He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd;" and *K. John*, i. 1. 193: "My picked man of countries."

146. *Kibe.* Chilblain. Cf. *Temp.* ii. 1. 276, *M. W.* i. 3. 35, and *Lear*, i. 5. 9.

153. *Hamlet was born.* This, in connection with what follows, makes Hamlet thirty years old; but many things in the early part of the play seem to show that Hamlet was nearer twenty than thirty. Dowden, however, argues that these allusions to youth are not inconsistent with the theory that Hamlet was thirty. The age at which S. conceives "that boyhood is blooming into adult strength and beauty" is "from twenty-one to twenty-five." Henry V. when he ascended the throne was twenty-six, yet the Bishop of Ely speaks of him as "in the very May-morn of his youth." "The stolen sons of Cymbeline, boys just ready to be men, are aged twenty-three and twenty-two," etc. Cf. *Much Ado*, iii. 3. 141: "all the hot bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty." The grave-digger himself speaks of "young Hamlet." On the whole, we may make Hamlet at least twenty-five, even if we hesitate to call him thirty. Perhaps, as Furnivall suggests, "when S. began the play he conceived Hamlet as quite a young man; but as the play grew, as greater weight of reflection, of insight into character, of knowl-

edge of life, etc., were wanted, he necessarily and naturally made Hamlet a formed man; and by the time he got to the grave-diggers' scene, told us the Prince was thirty — the right age for him then." For a *résumé* of the interesting discussion on this subject, see Furness, vol. i. pp. 391–394, and cf. preface, pp. xiv–xvii.

173. *You.* See on *me*, ii. 2. 446 above. *For eight year*, see on *a thousand pound*, iii. 2. 278 above.

194. *It is.* That is, this skull which is all that is left of him. What he abhors, what his gorge rises at, is *his imagination that here hung the lips that he has kissed. Gorge* = throat, swallow, stomach. Cf. *V. and A.* 58, *W. T.* ii. 1. 44, *Oth.* ii. 1. 236, etc.

201. *Favour.* Look, appearance; as often. Cf. *M. for M.* iv. 2. 34: "Pray, sir, by your good favour, — for surely, sir, a good favour you have, but that you have a hanging look," etc.

214. *Curiously.* Fancifully, ingeniously. Cf. *T. of S.* iv. 3. 144: "the sleeves curiously cut." Horatio anticipates some fanciful or far-fetched reasoning here, to which Hamlet replies that he will "follow him thither with *modesty* enough and *likelihood*," that is, not overstepping "the modesty of nature" (iii. 2. 20) and probability — naturally, not sophistically.

220. *Loam.* The word seems to mean *clay*, or something more tenacious than what we call *loam;* and so in the three other instances in which S. uses the word: *M. N. D.* iii. 1. 70, v. 1. 162, and *Rich. II.* i. 1. 179.

222–225. *Imperious Cæsar*, etc. Some think these lines are a quotation; but probably Hamlet is merely putting into rhyming form the fancy that for the moment passes through his mind. On this "tendency to doggerelize when he is speaking lightly or excitedly," cf. iii. 2. 272, etc.

Flaw. Gust. Dyce quotes Smith's *Sea Grammar*, 1627: "A flaw of wind is a gust, which is very violent upon a sudden, but quickly endeth." It is still used by sailors in the same sense; and so *flawy* = gusty. Cf. *V. and A.* 456, *Cor.* v. 3. 74, etc.

228. *Maimed.* Imperfect, defective; as in *Oth.* i. 3. 99, etc. By

the English law, a suicide was formerly buried at the meeting of cross-roads with a stake driven through his body and without any form of burial service. Cf. *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 383: "That in cross-ways have burial."

230. *Fordo.* See on ii. 1. 103 above; and for *it* = its, on i. 2. 216. *Estate* = rank. Cf. *R. of L.* 92, *M. of V.* ii. 9. 41, etc.

231. *Couch.* Hide; perhaps, literally, lie down. Cf. *M. W.* v. 2. 1, etc.

236. *Warrantise.* Cf. *Sonn.* 150. 7 and 1 *Hen. VI.* i. 3. 13.

237. *Order.* That is, the course which ecclesiastical rules prescribe.

240. *Shards.* Potsherds, fragments of pottery. In the only other instance of the word in S. it means the wing-cases of beetles. See *A. and C.* iii. 2. 20, and cf. *Macb.* iii. 2. 42 and *Cymb.* iii. 3. 20.

241. *Crants.* Wreaths, garlands. According to Jamieson's *Scottish Dict.*, *crance* is used in Lowland Scotch in the same sense. These garlands were often hung up in the church after the burial. Some were to be seen in English churches within fifty years or so.

242. *Strewments.* Not used elsewhere by S., but we have *strewings* in the same sense in *Cymb.* iv. 2. 285: "strewings fitt'st for graves." For the custom, cf. *R. and J.* iv. 5. 79, 89, v. 3. 281, *W. T.* iv. 4. 128, and *Cymb.* iv. 2. 218. On *bringing home*, Wright remarks: "As the bride was brought home to her husband's house with bell and festivity, so the dead maiden is brought to her last home *with bell and burial.*"

247. *Peace-parted.* Having parted in peace. For *part* = depart or die, cf. *Hen. V.* ii. 3. 12, *Macb.* v. 8. 52, etc. So *timely-parted* = having died in time, or by a natural death, in 2 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2. 161.

249. *May violets spring.* Cf. Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, xviii: —

> "'T is well; 't is something; we may stand
> Where he in English earth is laid,
> And from his ashes may be made
> The violet of his native land."

257. *Ingenious sense.* Keen intellect. Cf. *Lear*, iv. 6. 287.

262. *Skyish.* "Sky-aspiring" (*Rich. II.* i. 3. 130).

266. *Wonder-wounded.* Wonderstruck.

270. *Splenitive.* Passionate. Cf. *spleeny* in *Hen. VIII.* ii. 2. 99, and *spleenful* in 2 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2. 128 and *T. A.* ii. 3. 191. So *spleen* often = passion, impetuosity; as in *K. John*, ii. 1. 68, 448, iv. 3. 97, v. 7. 50, *Rich. III.* v. 3. 50, etc.

276. *Wag.* Move. Cf. iii. 4. 39 above; also *M. of V.* iv. 1. 76, *Cymb.* iv. 2. 173, etc.

279. *Quantity.* See on iii. 4. 75 above.

283. *'Swounds.* See on ii. 2. 593 above.

284. *Woo't.* A provincial contraction for *wouldst thou* or *wilt thou*, perhaps used here contemptuously. Cf. *A. and C.* iv. 2. 7 and iv. 15. 59, where it "denotes affectionate familiarity."

285. *Eisel.* "With the exception of the *dram of eale*, no word or phrase in this tragedy has occasioned more discussion than this *Esill* [in the quartos] or *Esile* [in the folio], which, as it stands, represents nothing in the heavens above, or the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth" (Furness). *Eisel* means vinegar in *Sonn.* 111. 10: —

> "I will drink
> Potions of eisel 'gainst my strong infection;"

vinegar being esteemed a protection against contagion. For other explanations, see Furness, vol. i. pp. 405–409. *Eat a crocodile* may refer, as some suppose, to the dried or pickled crocodile of the apothecary (cf. *R. and J.* v. 1. 43); or more probably, as others believe, to the toughness of the creature's hide.

287. *In.* Equivalent to *into*, as often.

292. *Mouth.* Brag, rant. Cf. iii. 2. 3 above.

296. *Golden couplets.* The pigeon generally sits on two eggs, and her young when first *disclosed*, or hatched (see on iii. 1. 170 above), are covered with a yellow down.

301. *The cat will mew*, etc. That is, things have their appointed course. The *dog will have his day* was a proverbial expression.

303. *Strengthen your patience.* Cf. *J. C.* ii. 1. 248: "Fearing to strengthen that impatience," etc. *In* = in the thought of.

304. *We 'll put*, etc. We will go to work at once. For *present*, see on iv. 3. 67 above; and for *push*, cf. *W. T.* v. 3. 129.

306. *A living monument.* A lasting one. "A statue like life itself." Wright suggests that the expression may be used in a double sense: that of enduring, as the queen would understand; and the deeper meaning, which Laertes would see, by which the life of Hamlet is menaced.

SCENE II. — 6. *Mutines.* See on iii. 4. 83 above. *Bilboes* were a kind of fetters by which mutinous sailors were linked together; so called from Bilboa, in Spain, which was famous from Roman times for manufactures of iron and steel. The sword known as the *bilbo* (see *M. W.* i. 1. 165 and iii. 5. 112) gets its name from the same place. As the prisoners in the bilboes were fastened close together, every motion of the one must disturb the sleep of the other. *Rashly* = hastily; as in *Rich. III.* iii. 5. 43.

13. *Sea-gown.* Cf. Cotgrave, *Fr. Dict.*: "Esclavine, . . . a sea-gowne; or a course high-collered, and short-sleeued gowne, reaching downe to the mid-leg, and vsed most by sea-men, and Saylors." *Scarf'd* = "put on loosely like a scarf."

14. *Find out them.* Cf. *J. C.* i. 3. 134: "To find out you."

15. *Finger'd.* Cf. 3 *Hen. VI.* v. 1. 44: "The king was slily finger'd from the deck."

17. *To unseal.* For the omission of *as*, cf. *Macb.* ii. 3. 55, etc.

20. *Larded.* See on iv. 5. 37 above. *Several* = separate, different. Cf. *L. C.* 206: "I have received from many a several fair," etc.

21. *Importing.* Concerning. Cf. *L. L. L.* iv. 1. 57: "This letter is mistook, it importeth none here," etc. For other meanings of *import*, see i. 2. 23, iv. 3. 65, and iv. 7. 80 above.

22. *Bugs.* Bugbears. Cf. *T. of S.* i. 2. 211: "Tush! tush! fear boys with bugs;" 3 *Hen. VI.* v. 2. 2: "For Warwick was a bug

that fear'd us all," etc. In both passages *fear* = frighten. Wright quotes Coverdale's translation of the *Psalms* (xci. 5): "thou shalt not nede to be afrayed for eny bugges by night ner for arowe that flyeth by daye."

23. *On the supervise.* That is, at sight, on the *looking-over* or reading of the document. *Bated* = excepted, allowed.

24. *Stay.* Stay for, wait for; as in *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 221, etc. Cf. the intransitive use in iii. 3. 95 above.

30. *Ere I could make,* etc. Before I formed my real plan, my brains had done the work.

31. *Sat me down.* For the reflexive use, cf. iii. 4. 18 above; also 2 *Hen. IV.* iii. 1. 56, 3 *Hen. VI.* ii. 5. 14, etc. We find it sometimes in modern writers; as in Goldsmith, *Traveller,* 32: "I sit me down a pensive hour to spend;" Tennyson, *Lotos-Eaters:* "They sat them down upon the yellow sand," etc.

33. *Statists.* Statesmen; as in *Cymb.* ii. 4. 16: "Statist though I am none."

36. *Yeoman's service.* The ancient yeomen were famous for their military valour. Cf. *Hen. V.* iii. 1. 25 and *Rich. III.* v. 3. 338.

42. *A comma.* "So as to separate them as little as possible." Many emendations have been proposed, but none are satisfactory.

43. *As's.* A quibble is intended between *as* and *ass* (Johnson). Malone remarks that in the midland counties the *s* in *as* is usually pronounced as in *us.* *Charge* = load, weight; as in *W. T.* iv. 4. 261, *R. and J.* v. 2. 18, etc.

45. *Debatement.* Debate, consideration; as in *M. for M.* v. 1. 99: "after much debatement."

47. *Shriving-time.* A term in common use for any short period.

48. *Ordinant.* Ordaining, ruling.

50. *Model.* Copy, counterpart. Cf. *Rich. II.* i. 2. 28, iii. 2. 153, etc.

51. *Writ.* Commission, mandate. Cf. *Cymb.* iii. 7. 1: "the emperor's writ."

53. *Changeling.* Alluding to fairy changelings. Cf. *M. N. D.* ii. 1. 23, etc.

54. *Sequent.* Cf. *A. W.* ii. 2. 56: "Indeed your 'O Lord, sir!' is very sequent to your whipping," etc.

56. *Go to't.* Go to their death. Cf. *T. G.* of *V.* iv. 4. 3: "one that I saved from drowning when three or four of his blind brothers and sisters went to it"; where *went to it* may be similarly used, though the dictionaries and commentaries do not recognize *go to it* in this idiomatic sense — if such it be.

57. *Make love to.* Court, seek. Cf. *Macb.* iii. 1. 124: "I to your assistance do make love," etc.

58. *Near my conscience.* Cf. *A. Y. L.* v. 2. 68: "near the heart;" *Hen. VIII.* iii. 1. 71: "so near mine honour," etc. For *defeat*, see on ii. 2. 587 above.

59. *Insinuation.* Meddling; *insinuating* themselves into the business. So *insinuate* = intermeddle in *W. T.* iv. 4. 760, etc.

61. *Pass.* Thrust; as in 170 below. Cf. the stage-direction at iii. 4. 23 above.

62. *Opposites.* Opponents. See on iii. 2. 214 above.

63. *Thinks 't thee.* That is, *thinks it thee* = seems it to thee. In *Rich. III.* iii. 1. 63, the folio has "Where it think'st best vnto your Royall selfe;" the 1st and 2d quartos "seems best." This *think* is the same verb that we have in *methinks* (= it seems to me), from the Anglo-Saxon *thyncan*, to seem, not from *thencan*, to think.

Stand me now upon. Be incumbent on me. Cf. *Rich. II.* ii. 3. 138; "It stands your grace upon to do him right;" and *A. and C.* ii. 1. 50: —

> "It only stands
> Our lives upon to use our strongest hands."

66. *Angle.* Angling-line; used literally in *A. and C.*. ii. 5. 10; and again figuratively, as here, in *W. T.* iv. 2. 52. On *proper*, cf. *Temp.* iii. 3. 60: "their proper selves," etc.

67. *Is 't not perfect conscience.* That is, perfectly consistent with a good conscience. We should not use such an expression now,

nor "Made it no conscience to destroy a prince" (*K. John*, iv. 2. 229). Cf. *Hen. VIII.* v. 3. 67.

68. *Quit.* Requite; as in 276 below.

70. *In.* Into; as in v. 1. 287 above. *Come in further evil* = commit further crimes.

73. *It will be short*, etc. "You never suspect the errand Hamlet is on until you happen to hear that little word, '*the interim is mine!*' . . . The man is transformed by a great resolve; *his mind is made up!* The return of the vessel from England will be the signal for his own execution, and therefore the moral problem is solved; the only chance of saving his life from a lawless murderer is to slay him; it has become an act of self-defence; he can do it with perfect conscience" (Miles).

79. *Bravery.* Bravado. Cf. *J. C.* v. 1. 10: "With fearful bravery," etc.

83. *Waterfly.* "A water-fly skips up and down upon the surface of the water without any apparent purpose or reason, and is thence the proper emblem of a busy trifler" (Johnson). Cf. *T. and C.* v. 1. 38: "How the poor world is pestered with such waterflies, diminutives of nature!"

86. *Gracious.* Cf. i. 1. 164 above.

89. *Chough.* Cf. *Temp.* ii. 1. 266, *A. W.* iv. 1. 22, etc. Furness favours Caldecott's suggestion that the word here is = *chuff*, a wealthy boor or clown. Cf. Cotgrave, *Fr. Dict.*: "Franc-gontier. A substantiall yonker, wealthie chuffe;" and again: "Maschefouyn. A chuffe, boore, lobcocke, lozell; one that is fitter to feed with cattell, then to conuerse with men." See also Massinger, *Duke of Milan*, iii. 1:—

> "To see these chuffs, that every day may spend
> A soldier's entertainment for a year,
> Yet make a third meal of a bunch of raisins."

91. *Sweet.* A word that did much service in the time of S.

94. *Bonnet.* Cap; as in *M. of V.* i. 2. 81, etc.

99. *Indifferent.* See on iii. 1. 122 above. On the dialogue here, cf. iii. 2. 370 fol.

106. *I beseech you, remember* —. The full expression is found in *L. L. L.* v. 1. 103: "I do beseech thee, remember thy courtesy; I beseech thee, apparel thy head." The meaning seems to be, "Remember that you have done all that courtesy requires" (in removing your hat). *Every Man in His Humour*, i. 1: "Pray you, remember your courts'y. . . . Nay, pray you be cover'd." It is curious that "*leave* your courtesy" is used in the same sense in *M. N. D.* iv. 1. 21.

107. *For mine ease.* The conventional reply. Cf. Marston, *Malcontent*, ind.: —

> "*Cun.* I beseech you, sir, be covered.
> *Sly.* No, in good faith, for mine ease."

109. *Absolute.* Complete, perfect; as in *M. W.* iii. 3. 66: "An absolute courtier."

110. *Differences.* Characteristics, or traits that distinguish him from other men.

111. *Feelingly.* So as to hit it exactly (Schmidt). Cf. *M. for M* i. 2. 36: "Do I speak feelingly now?" See also *T. N.* ii. 3. 172.

112. *Card or calendar of gentry.* "The general preceptor of elegance; the card [see on v. 1. 142 above] by which a gentleman is to direct his course; the calendar by which he is to choose his time, that what he does may be both excellent and seasonable" (Johnson). *Gentry* = courtesy, gentlemanliness. Cf. ii. 2. 22 above.

113. *The continent*, etc. The sum total of all gentlemanly qualities. See on iv. 4. 64 and iv. 7. 72 above.

115. *Definement.* Definition, description. The sense of this affected jargon seems to be: You describe him justly; though to do it minutely and thoroughly would overtask one's memory and yet

not come up to his deserts. Verily, he is a man of manifold virtues, and of so rare a nature that none but himself can be his parallel, while those who would imitate him are at best only his shadow.

118. *Yaw.* A vessel *yaws* when she falls off for the moment from her true course. The term is still in use among sailors.

119. *Of great article.* That is, of much importance. *Infusion* = endowments, qualities. *Dearth* = high value, or *dearness;* an old sense of the word.

121. *Semblable.* Cf. *T. of A.* iv. 3. 22 : "His semblable, yea, himself, Timon disdains," etc.

122. *Trace.* Follow. Cf. *Macb.* iv. 1. 153 : "That trace him in his line," etc. *Umbrage* = shadow ; used by S. only here.

126. *The concernancy, sir?* The meaning, sir ? What does this mean ?

127. *More rawer.* See on ii. 1. 11 above.

129. *Is 't not possible,* etc. "The meaning may be, 'Can't you understand your own absurd language on another man's tongue ? Use your wits, sir, and you 'll soon be at the bottom of it'" (Moberly).

131. *Nomination.* Naming, mentioning by name. Cf. *L. L. L.* iv. 2. 138.

139. *Approve.* Make approved, commend.

142. *Compare with.* Assume to rival.

145. *Imputation.* Reputation, opinion. Cf. *M. of V.* i. 3. 13, *T. and C.* i. 3. 339, etc.

146. *Meed.* Merit. Cf. 3 *Hen. VI.* iv. 8. 38: "my meed hath got me fame," etc.

152. *Imponed.* Staked, wagered.

154. *Assigns.* Appendages ; an affected expression.

Hangers. The straps by which the sword was hung to the belt

157. *Liberal conceit.* Tasteful design. Cf. *R. of L.* 1423 :—

> "For much imaginary work was there ;
> Conceit deceitful, so compact, so kind," etc.

160. *Edified by the margent.* Instructed by the explanation in the margin ; a very common thing in old books.

162. *Germane.* Akin, pertinent. Cf. *W. T.* iv. 4. 802 and *T. of A.* iv. 3. 344.

171. *Twelve for nine.* Johnson says : "This wager I do not understand. In a dozen passes one must exceed the other more or less than three hits. Nor can I comprehend how in a dozen there can be twelve for nine." Various attempts have been made to "figure it out," but they are not very satisfactory. Perhaps S. wrote the "three hits" at random, and added the "twelve for nine" without stopping to think whether subtracting the three from twelve made the arithmetic all right. Cf. *Hen. V.* i. 2. 57 fol., where he subtracts 426 from 805 and gets a remainder of 421. The error is copied from Holinshed, but the fact that S. did not see and correct it shows his carelessness in regard to such matters.

173. *Answer.* Acceptance of the challenge. Cf. *T. and C.* i. 3. 332: "And wake him to the answer" (referring to the challenge of Hector).

178. *Breathing time.* Time for exercise. Cf. *A. W.* i. 2. 17: "For breathing and exploit ; " *Id.* ii. 3. 271 : "thou wast created for men to breathe themselves upon thee."

180. *Hold.* Similar "confusion of two constructions," is not uncommon in S.

183. *Re-deliver.* Report. Cf. iii. 1. 94, where it is used in a less affected way.

190. *This lapwing,* etc. Steevens quotes Greene, *Never too Late :* "Are you no sooner hatched, with the lapwing, but you will run away with the shell on your head ?" Hence the bird was the symbol of a forward fellow: and also of insincerity, from its habit of alluring intruders from its nest by crying far away from it. Cf. *M. for M.* i. 4. 32 and *C. of E.* iv. 2. 27.

192. *Comply.* Use compliment, play the courtier. Cf. ii. 2. 384 above.

195. *Outward habit,* etc. Exterior politeness of address. *Yesty* = frothy. Cf. *Macb.* iv. 1. 53: "the yesty waves."

197. *Fond and winnowed.* Foolish and over-refined (cf. *picked* in v. 1. 144 above).

200. *Commended him.* Cf. *T. and C.* iii. 1. 73: "Commends himself most affectionately to you;" *M. of V.* iii. 2. 235: "Antonio commends him to you," etc.

203. *Or that.* Or if. Cf. iv. 7. 61, 150, and 158 above.

206. *Fitness.* Convenience.

211. *In happy time.* Just in time; like the Fr. *à la bonne heure.* Cf. *T. of S.* ind. 1. 90, *A. W.* v. 1. 6, *J. C.* ii. 2. 60, etc.

212. *Gentle entertainment.* Conciliating behaviour.

218. *At the odds.* "With the advantage that I am allowed" (Malone).

But thou wouldst not think, etc. A marked illustration of Shakespeare's fondness for presentiments.

222. *Gain-giving.* Misgiving. Cf. *gainsay.*

224. *Fit* = ready; as in *Cor.* i. 3. 47: "We are fit to bid her welcome," etc.

229. *Since no man,* etc. A passage corrupted in the early eds. The reading in the text was suggested by Johnson, who paraphrases the passage thus: "Since *no man knows aught of* the state of life which *he leaves,* since he cannot judge what other years may produce, why should he be afraid of *leaving* life betimes? Why should he dread an early death, of which he cannot tell whether it is an exclusion of happiness or an interception of calamity? I despise the superstition of augury and omens, which has no ground in reason or piety; my comfort is, that I cannot fall but by the direction of Providence."

234. *This presence.* This courtly assembly.

237. *Exception.* Disapprobation, objection. Cf. *Hen. V.* ii. 4. 34: "modest in exception," etc.

251. *In nature.* "A piece of satire on fantastical honour. Though *nature* is satisfied, yet he will ask advice of older men of

the sword whether artificial honour ought to be contented with Hamlet's submission" (Steevens).

257. *Ungor'd.* Unwounded, unhurt. Cf. *T. and C.* iii. 3. 228: "My fame is shrewdly gor'd."

264. *Stick fiery off.* Be brilliantly set off.

268. *Your grace,* etc. "I understand that your grace has taken care that points shall be given me; but for all that I fear that I shall be the weaker. No, replies the king, I have seen you both, and the points given will counterbalance his Paris improvement" (Moberly).

270. *Since he is better'd.* Since he has perfected himself in his art.

272. *Likes.* Pleases, suits. See on ii. 2. So above. *A* = one.

276. *Quit,* etc. Pay him off in the third encounter. Cf. 68 above.

279. *Union.* A fine pearl. Malone quotes Florio, *Ital. Dict.*: "Vnione, . . . a faire, great, orient pearle."

282. *Kettle.* That is, kettle-drum. Cf. i. 2. 11 above.

289. *This pearl,* etc. "Under pretence of throwing a pearl into the cup, the king may be supposed to drop some poisonous drug into the wine. Hamlet seems to suspect this, when he afterwards discovers the effects of the poison, and tauntingly asks him, 'Is thy union here?'" (Steevens).

294. *He's fat,* etc. There is a tradition that Richard Burbadge was the original Hamlet, and that these words were inserted because he was corpulent. An elegy upon the actor says: —

> "No more young Hamlet, though but scant of breath,
> Shall cry 'Revenge!' for his dear father's death."

295. *Napkin.* Handkerchief; the only meaning of the word in S. Cf. *L. C.* 15, *Oth.* iii. 3. 290, 306, etc.

296. *Carouses.* Drinks a health. Cf. *Oth.* ii. 3. 55: —

> "Now my sick fool Roderigo,
> Whom love hath turn'd almost the wrong side out,

To Desdemona hath to-night carous'd,
Potations pottle-deep," etc.

303. *And yet*, etc. "This symptom of relenting is not only a redeeming touch in the character of Laertes (and Shakespeare, in his large tolerance and true knowledge of human nature, is fond of giving these redeeming touches even to his worst characters), but it forms a judiciously interposed link between the young man's previous determination to take the Prince's life treacherously and his subsequent revealment of the treachery. From the deliberate malice of becoming the agent in such a plot, to the remorseful candour which confesses it, would have been too violent and too abrupt a moral change, had not the dramatist, with his usual skill, introduced this connecting point of half compunction" (Clarke).

306. *Make a wanton of me.* Trifle with me as if you were playing with a boy. Cf. *Rich. II.* iii. 3. 164.

309. Much has been written on the *change of rapiers* in the stage-direction, for an abstract of which, and also for the practice of celebrated actors, see Furness.

313. *As a woodcock.* Cf. i. 3. 115 above.

315. *How does the queen?* That is, what is the matter with the queen?

324. *Unbated.* See on iv. 7. 137 above; and for *practice*, iv. 7. 66, 137.

328. *Envenom'd too.* That is, envenomed as well as unbated.

333. *Is thy union here?* See on 289 above.

335. *Temper'd.* Mixed, compounded (Schmidt). Cf. *R. and J.* iii. 5. 98 and *Cymb.* v. 5. 250.

338. Laertes, who was not wounded till after Hamlet, dies first of the poison; but possibly, as Furness suggests, Hamlet gave Laertes a mortal thrust for the "scratch," which was all that Laertes was aiming at, — so that Laertes dies of the wound, Hamlet of the poison.

342. *Mutes.* "That are either auditors of this catastrophe, or

at most only mute performers, that fill the stage without any part in the action" (Johnson).

343. *Sergeant.* Sheriff's officer. Malone quotes Silvester's *Du Bartas:* "And Death, drad Seriant [serjant] of th' eternall Iudge." Cf. *C. of E.* iv. 2. 56, 61, iv. 3. 30, 40, and *Hen. VIII.* i. 1. 198.

348. *Antique.* For the accent, cf. ii. 2. 482 above.

352. *Live behind.* Cf. *Much Ado,* iii. 1. 110: "No glory lives behind the back of such."

360. *O'er-crows.* As a victorious cock crows over his defeated antagonist.

364. *Occurrents.* Occurrences, incidents. Steevens quotes Drayton, *Barons' Wars,* i. 12: "As our occurrents happen in degree."

365. *Which have solicited.* Which have induced me to act as I have done. Cf. *Rich. II.* i. 2. 2.

366. *Cracks.* Breaks. Cf. *M. W.* ii. 2. 301: "My heart is ready to crack;" *K. John,* v. 7. 52: "The tackle of my heart is crack'd;" *Cor.* v. 3. 9: "with a crack'd heart," etc.

371. *This quarry cries on havoc.* This heap of dead proclaims an indiscriminate slaughter. *Quarry* = the game killed; as in *Mach.* iv. 3. 206, etc.

372. *Toward.* See on i. 1. 77 above, and cf. *A. and C.* ii. 6. 75: "Four feasts are toward." For *eternal,* see on i. 5. 21 above.

379. *His mouth.* That is, the king's.

382. *Jump.* See on i. 1. 65 above.

388. *Carnal.* Sensual, as in *Oth.* i. 3. 335. The allusion is to the murder of the elder Hamlet by Claudius previous to his incestuous union with Gertrude.

389. This line refers to Polonius, and the next to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, whose deaths were *forced* on Hamlet.

390. *Put on.* See on iv. 7. 130 above.

391. *Upshot.* Conclusion, final issue. Cf. *T. N.* iv. 2. 76. In archery the *upshot* was the final shot, which decided the match.

393. *Deliver.* Report, relate. See on i. 2. 193 above.

396. *Rights of memory.* Rights which are remembered.

399. *Will draw on more.* Will be seconded by others.

402. *On.* In consequence of.

404. *Put on.* Put to the proof, tried; not the meaning it has in 390 above.

405. *Passage.* Departure, death; as in iii. 3. 86 above.

410. "Hamlet has gained the haven for which he longed so often; yet without bringing guilt on himself by his death: no fear that his sleep should have bad dreams in it *now.* Those whom he loved, his mother, Laertes, Ophelia, have all died guiltless or forgiven. Late, and under the strong compulsion of approaching death, he has done, and well done, the inevitable task from which his gentle nature shrank" (Moberly).

APPENDIX

Hamlet and the Problems of the Play

Readers — and critics also — often forget that we see nothing of Hamlet until the shadow of his coming fate has fallen upon him. His father is dead, his mother has married again, his uncle is on the throne which he had every reason to expect would be his own — not by direct inheritance, for in Denmark the sovereignty was elective, but because the son of the dead king was generally chosen, unless there were strong reasons (and in this instance there were none such) for varying from this precedent. No wonder that he still wears the "nighted colour" of mourning, and that this customary suit of solemn black is but the imperfect symbol of the inward sorrow that passeth show, the mere trappings of a woe too deep for any outward manifestation to express aright. What was he before the tragedy of his life had begun?

He was a young man at the opening of the play — virtually such, whether his age was twenty or thirty[1] — and a student at the university of Wittenberg. He was every inch a prince, endowed by nature with all graces of body and mind, and by education with all liberal accomplishments, — the very ideal of youthful beauty and talent —

> "The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword;
> The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
> The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
> The observ'd of all observers."

[1] On this question, which I do not propose to discuss at length, see note on v. 1. 153 above.

Ophelia's description of her lover reminds us of what Lady Percy says of her husband, the gallant Hotspur (2 *Hen. IV.* ii. 3. 21): —

> "he was indeed the glass
> Wherein the noble youth did dress themselves, . . .
> so that in speech, in gait,
> In diet, in affections of delight,
> In military rules, humours of blood,
> He was the mark and glass, copy and book,
> That fashion'd others."

Intellectually, as an anonymous critic in the *Quarterly Review* (vol. lxxix. p. 333 fol.) has said, Hamlet has something of the universality of Shakespeare himself: "He has a mind wise and witty, abstract and practical; the utmost reach of philosophical contemplation is mingled with the most penetrating sagacity in the affairs of life; playful jest, biting satire, sparkling repartee, with the darkest and deepest thoughts that can agitate man. He exercises all his various faculties with surprising readiness. He passes without an effort 'from grave to gay, from lively to severe,' — from his every-day character to personated lunacy. . . . His philosophy stands out conspicuous among the brilliant faculties which contend for the mastery. It is the quality which gives weight and dignity to the rest. It intermingles with all his actions. He traces the most trifling incidents up to their general laws. The commonest ideas that pass through his mind are invested with a wonderful freshness and originality. His meditations in the churchyard are on the trite notion that all ambition leads but to the grave. But what condensation, what variety, what picturesqueness, what intense unmitigated gloom! It is the finest sermon that was ever preached against the vanities of life."

But the pessimistic Hamlet of the play is as unlike the Hamlet of earlier days as the Shakespeare of the tragedies is unlike the Shakespeare of the sunny comedies that preceded or the divine "romances" that followed them. We see him only when "in the depths," not "on the heights," like the poet in his later years. But

Shakespeare has given us a hint of what Hamlet was before an evil fate plunged him in those depths never to rise again. It is where (ii. 2. 306 fol.) he is talking with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and says: —

"I have of late — but wherefore I know not — lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, — why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me; no, nor woman neither."

Why does the poet put this magnificent eulogy of nature and of man into the mouth of Hamlet? At first thought it seems strangely out of place, with reference both to the speaker and to the persons whom he addresses. He has just made the two young men confess that they were summoned to Elsinore by the King, and he is telling them why they were sent for, — because he has become so moody and melancholy, and his uncle would fain find out the reason. We might expect him to say, "I have of late lost all my mirth, and the earth seems to me a desert, the heavens a foul collection of vapours; neither man nor woman delights me longer." But why this glowing description of earth and sky as they do *not* appear to him? Why this splendid tribute to the angelic, the godlike nature of man, in whom he finds no delight? What purpose can it serve except to suggest to us what Hamlet was *before* the world became dark and man indifferent to him?

It is passing strange that no commentator or critic has seen[1]

[1] At least, so far as I am aware; and I find no hint of this interpretation in Furness's extensive quotations from English, German, and other commentators, or in any other source accessible to me.

that here we have a most significant hint of the *real* Hamlet as Shakespeare wished that we should recognize him; and what an admirable character it is! He has a poet's sensitiveness to the beauty and the grandeur of the natural world. His language is that of a lover of nature — Wordsworth's was never more so. What warmth of affection in every graphic epithet! — "this *goodly* frame, the earth; this *most excellent* canopy, the air; this *brave* o'erhanging firmament; this *majestical* roof, fretted with golden fire!" It reminds one of the poet's own love of nature, as illustrated so often in the *Sonnets* (the 7th, 18th, 33d, 73d, 98th, 99th, etc.).

And Hamlet's interest in man is — or *was* — even greater than in nature; for man is the paragon of animals, the crown and the lord of creation. Alas, that such a man should cease to delight in man! We might never suspect that he had been other than the misanthrope he now appears, were it not for this glimpse of his former, happier, more genial self which the poet is thus careful to give us, but which the critics have failed to discern. Verily, as Fortinbras says in the last speech of the play, "he was likely had he been put on [put to the test, tried] to have proved most royally!"[1]

I may add that this passage, and the other references to Hamlet in the last speeches of Horatio, indicate (like such references to leading characters in the plays generally) Shakespeare's own estimate of the man; and that estimate is a high one. "A noble heart," a "sweet prince," has been the victim of the sin of others — not without fault or weakness of his own, for who is perfect? — but far more sinned against than sinning.

What is Hamlet's fault or weakness? How far his apparent ina-

[1] Professor Corson, after remarking (see p. 193) that Shakespeare's prose "can never be said to encroach upon the domain of verse," adds that "the nearest approach to it perhaps" is in this speech of Hamlet. Why is it in prose? To my thinking, because Hamlet lapses into it half unconsciously, as if forgetting for the moment with whom he is talking. It *is* poetry, but to put it into verse would be absurdly out of keeping with the characters and the situation.

bility to bear the burden that is laid upon him is inherent in his nature (as Goethe, Coleridge, and others have assumed),[1] or how far it is due to his youth, education, and habits up to the time when we become acquainted with him, or how far to the perplexing questions connected with the performance of the task itself, is not easy to determine. For myself, I believe that the majority of those who have attempted to solve the problem have laid too much stress upon the first factor I have mentioned, — Hamlet's own nature, — and too little upon the others, — his age, training, and habits, and the perplexing character of the work he is enjoined to do.

As I have said, Hamlet is a youth in college — virtually a youth, whether his age be twenty or thirty — a student in the true sense of the word; one who loves study, and especially the study of philosophy, for which he has a natural aptitude. As yet no demand has been made upon his active powers; he has had no opportunity of showing what he can *do*, as a man, as a prince, as a possible monarch. The very first call upon the young student from the outside world is this sudden, exacting, and terrible one. Let us assume, for the present, that this fully expresses the nature of the burden laid upon him, — sudden, exacting, terrible, — the injunction to revenge his father's murder by killing the murderer, his uncle, who has usurped that father's throne[2] and married his mother. Imagine Ferdinand or Florizel, or any other of Shakespeare's princely young heroes, in Hamlet's place. Can we be sure that any one of them would endure the test better than he does? Will the ghostly appeal at once make him a hero? There is one chance out of a thousand that it may. Hamlet was not that exceptional paragon of youthful heroism, leaping at one bound from boyhood to

[1] See p. 15 above. In what follows, it will be seen that I am largely indebted to Werder, whose interpretation of the character of Hamlet seems to me, as I have said, the only satisfactory one.

[2] He is not an usurper in the strict sense of the term, having been duly elected king after the death of his brother; but he had murdered that brother to gain the crown — in fact, as Hamlet says, "stole" it.

full-grown manhood of the highest type, equal to the most exacting duty, the most tremendous emergency.

Called home from the university to attend his father's funeral, he is brought face to face with that father's ghost, and hears from the spirit lips the tale of murder, adultery, and usurpation, with the dread command to avenge the triple crime. His first impulse is to "sweep to his revenge"; but the moment he begins to reflect upon it he feels his weakness. He cries out for strength: —

> "Hold, hold, my heart!
> And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
> But bear me stiffly up!"

He lapses into a fit of hysterical impotence, — the doctors recognize what they call "male hysteria," though the name is unfortunate. He takes out his note-book and pretends to set it down that "one may smile and smile, and be a villain."[1] He is in the same state of morbid excitement when his friends come in and eagerly demand, "What news, my lord?" It is this which leads to the "wild and whirling words" that surprise and grieve Horatio; but Hamlet now begins to recover his self-possession, and it is with all sincerity that he replies: "I 'm sorry they offend you; yes, faith, heartily." He exacts the oath of secrecy, but the voice of the Ghost underground drives him wild again, and we have more hysterical jesting about the "fellow in the cellarage" and the "old

[1] Here, as Werder views it, Shakespeare intends to suggest "the *situation* of his hero. Instead of telling us what Hamlet can do first, he lets him do what he first can, namely, bring out, expose to view the character of the King. . . . He can at the first only take passing note of the King, only point him out to himself, — 'So, uncle, there you are!' — beyond this, nothing else, absolutely nothing! Upon the one side, a well defended fortress; and without, a single man who is to take it, he alone." But he does not actually write down anything. "He jabs the point of his pencil once or twice into the leaf — because he cannot do the same to the King with his sword, as he would like to, — nothing further, — only such marks, such a sign, does he make."

mole" that can work in the earth so fast as to follow when he and his companions change their position. But again he becomes himself; and I cannot but believe, — though, so far as I am aware, no critic has suggested it, — that it is the consciousness of his repeated loss of self-control, rather than any plan he forms of feigning insanity, which prompts the hint that he may hereafter think meet to "put an antic disposition on." It seems to me most improbable that, in his present state of excitement, so soon after the interview with the Ghost, he would or could form definite plans for carrying out its commands.[1] On the other hand, it seems to me very natural that, having been betrayed into uncontrollable nervous excitement, which must appear to his companions almost insanity, it should occur to him that this might happen again, and that it was well to warn them against hinting, by any "ambiguous giving-out," their knowledge of the cause of it. Hamlet shows here his keen observation of human nature. He knew how strong is the temptation, when other people are puzzled at what we understand, to shake our heads significantly, or to intimate that "we know" and "could, if we would," explain it. If we must not tell a secret, there is immense satisfaction in being able to hint that we know it.

This suggests the question, Was Hamlet's insanity real or feigned?

[1] Werder remarks: "As soon as Hamlet has heard what the Ghost tells him, his clear head instantly takes in the whole dire pass to which Truth and Right, hopelessly beyond all human power, have come; . . . a dilemma of so terrible and monstrous a nature that for a man involved in it to break through it alone by his own unaided strength, — this is indeed a task which may well cause him the loss of his understanding. . . . This natural, immediate feeling is the inmost impulse to his purpose of putting an antic disposition on. . . . But that instinctive motive instantly makes itself influential in him as an advantage; so it becomes effective as *design*." This is undoubtedly true, whether his first feeling about it is precisely what Werder assumes or not; and the critic is clearly right, I think, in the opinion that the degree to which Hamlet afterwards plays the madman is comparatively slight.

We may judge of the amount that has been written on the subject, from the fact that the abstract of it in Furness's edition of *Hamlet* fills forty royal octavo pages of fine print.

The weight of authority is, on the whole, decidedly against the theory that Hamlet is really mad. The majority of the experts in insanity are on that side, but even these doctors disagree, as do the medical men who have not made this class of disorders a specialty.

At a meeting of the New Shakspere Society of London, in June, 1882, Dr. Brinsley Nicholson, one of the best Shakespeare scholars of our day, and an able physician, though not a specialist in mental disease, read a long paper on the question, "Was Hamlet mad?" which was a very strong plea for the affirmative. Everything that can be said on that side was condensed into it. An interesting discussion followed, in which Dr. Furnivall, Peter Bayne, Frederic Harrison, and others took part, Dr. Nicholson being allowed the concluding speech, that he might answer the objections made to his arguments. A vote of the members present was then taken on the question, and the result was *two* in the *affirmative* (Dr. Nicholson and Mr. Harrison) and *fifteen* in the *negative*.

In the old *Hystorie of Hamblet*, the hero feigns insanity. If Shakespeare had intended to vary from the original story on this point, I believe that, as in similar cases in the other plays, he would not have left room for doubt whether he had done it.

I agree with Campbell the poet, James Russell Lowell, and Furnivall, that to make Hamlet mad is a degradation of the character. Campbell says (in *Blackwood* for February, 1818): "Most certain it is that Hamlet's whole perfect being had received a shock that had unsettled his faculties; that there was disorder in his soul none can doubt, — that is, a shaking and unsettling of his powers from their due sources of action. But who can believe for a moment that there was in his mind the least degree of that which, with physiological meaning, we call disease? Such a supposition would at once destroy the intellectual sovereignty in his being which in our eyes constitutes his exaltation. Shakespeare never could intend that we should be

allowed to feel pity for a mind to which we were meant to bow; nor does it seem to me consistent with the nature of his own imagination to have subjected one of his most ideal beings to such mournful mortal infirmity." Lowell says (in *Among My Books*, 1st series): "Hamlet, among all the characters of Shakespeare, is the most eminently a metaphysician and psychologist. He is a close observer, continually analyzing his own nature, and that of others. . . . If such a man assumed madness, he would play his part perfectly. If Shakespeare himself, without going mad, could so observe and remember all the abnormal symptoms as to be able to reproduce them in Hamlet, why should it be beyond the power of Hamlet to reproduce them in himself. [A complete answer to some of the strongest arguments of the experts.] If you deprive Hamlet of reason, there is no truly tragic motive left. He would be a fit subject for Bedlam, but not for the stage. We might have pathology enough, but no pathos. . . . If Hamlet is irresponsible, the whole play is a chaos." Dr. Furnivall, in the discussion at the New Shakspere Society, said that the theory of insanity would "rob *Hamlet* of half its value, and turn all the seeming contradictions and difficulties of Hamlet's words and character into the ravings and acts of a maniac, of no interest to any human being except his doctor and attendant, save to excite pity. If Hamlet was only a younger Lear, half mankind's interest in him would be gone."

It is significant that in the play the only persons who believe Hamlet mad are old Polonius — whose judgment on that point is as far astray as it is concerning the *cause* of the supposed insanity — and the Queen and Ophelia, who, like many of their sex, are uncritical and hasty in their conclusions. The King, who is no fool, and who from the first is inclined to scrutinize Hamlet's behaviour closely and critically, says, after the interview of the prince with Ophelia of which he has been a hidden auditor: —

> "Love! his affections do not that way tend;
> Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,

Was not like madness. There 's something in his soul
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood,
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger; which for to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England."

To Claudius the madness is so palpably mere feigning that his suspicious mind sees method in it, and he determines to get Hamlet out of the way as soon as possible.

It is even more significant that Horatio, the self-poised, level-headed scholar, the intimate friend and confidant of Hamlet, never says a word that lends support to the notion of insanity — not even in his concise summary of the tragedy in the closing scene. He gives orders for the obsequies of the prince and those who have been involved in his fate, and announces that he will speak the funeral oration on the occasion: —

"And let me speak to the yet unknowing world
How these things came about; so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning and forced cause,
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fallen on the inventors' heads. All this can I
Truly deliver."

Here we have distinct reference to the murder of the elder Hamlet, the adultery of Claudius and the Queen, the accidental death of Polonius, and the fate of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (which was, as it were, "forced" upon Hamlet), and, in the upshot, or conclusion of the tragic history, the thwarting of the King's plot, which recoiled upon his own head and that of Laertes; but not one little hint of Hamlet's madness, which, if it had been a factor in the bloody business, would have been too important to be omitted. It would have been the apparent cause of all the deaths

except the guilty King's; for we might infer that, had not the ghostly revelation driven Hamlet to insanity, he would have swept to his revenge, in obedience to his first impulse, and Claudius might have been the only victim. We could not see how Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, or Laertes would have been drawn into the whirlpool of slaughter. Hamlet might have fallen, and his death and that of Claudius might have been fatal to the conscience-stricken and bereaved Queen, but the others would almost certainly have escaped. To omit mention of the madness, then, if it had existed, would be to omit the chief extenuating fact in the report of Hamlet's case, which the dying prince had begged his friend to make: —

> "Horatio, I am dead:
> Thou livest; report me and my cause *aright*
> To the unsatisfied."

And again, in the next speech: —

> "O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
> Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
> If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
> Absent thee from felicity awhile,
> And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
> To tell my story;"

And once more, with his last breath, he says of Fortinbras: —

> "he has my dying voice;
> So tell him, with the occurrents, more or less,
> Which have solicited" —

That is, *all* the events, great or small, which have induced me to act as I have done.

We may be sure that if insanity had been one of these causes or influences, Horatio would not have failed to give it due prominence in his comprehensive statement of "how these things came about" — a statement which, though brief, is evidently meant to include every important fact in the case.

To return to the position in which Hamlet finds himself after the visit of the Ghost: Assuming, as I have said, that the task imposed upon him is simply what it appears at first — sudden, exacting, terrible — and bearing in mind the youth, education, and habits of Hamlet, have we a right to say that the weakness he feels and acknowledges after that first impulse to sweep to his revenge, is proof of any inherent infirmity of will?

He is not physically weak. He is an athlete, accustomed to manly exercises, and when he would follow the Ghost on the castle platform, Horatio and Marcellus together cannot hold him back, though they both declare that he shall not do it, and do their best to detain him by force. Nor is he lacking in courage, as the same scene shows. When his friends warn him not to follow the apparition lest it lure him to destruction or drive him mad, he replies: —

> "Why, what should be the fear?
> I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
> And for my soul, what can it do to that,
> Being a thing immortal as itself?"

There is both physical and moral courage in that, such as few youths fresh from college would be capable of, such as the soldier Marcellus evidently does not possess.

Why then the weakness and faltering a little later? It is easy to say: "Because Hamlet is brave and strong only under the stimulus of a sudden impulse. If he pauses to think of what he has to do, resolution evaporates in speculation instead of embodying itself in action. Thinking too precisely on the event (or result), his will, naturally weak, is paralyzed. Why, he sees and confesses it himself!"

But, though Hamlet seems to be a witness on the side of such critics, their explanation of his behaviour is superficial and insufficient. True, Hamlet calls himself a dull and muddy-mettled rascal, an ass, a coward, a villain, pigeon-livered, one who unpacks his heart with words, and falls a-cursing when prompted to his revenge

by heaven and hell; but these self-upbraidings are the morbid result of the distracting conflict in his soul.[1] He *is* prompted to his revenge by heaven *and hell*. Motives from both worlds unite in urging vengeance, but they urge him in very different directions for wreaking that vengeance.

Hamlet has told Ophelia that he is "proud, revengeful, ambitious." The Hamlet of the old *Hystorie* was all that, and his notions as to the duty of revenge in a case like this were those of the ancient Norsemen, as simple as they were savage. The King, in talking with Laertes, expresses them concisely when he says, "Revenge should have no bounds." This earlier Hamlet, who was no philosopher, would have seen his way at once and clearly. He would have killed the King the moment he found an opportunity, letting consequences take care of themselves. In this he would be only discharging what was then regarded as a sacred duty. If he had been killed himself the next minute, he would have died with a good conscience.

Now, this original Hamlet is just the man that so many excellent critics and commentators would have Shakespeare's Hamlet to be; but it is not the man that Shakespeare has made him. The Wittenberg student and philosopher is no Norse barbarian, like his

[1] As Werder puts it, all this "is an outbreak of his wrath at not being permitted to follow the first impulse, the immediate prompting of the thirst for revenge. He is thus enraged because his reason is so strong as to restrain him; and because he restrains himself he has to suffer such pain. . . . His gall does not affect his head, his *will tames* his heart, the gnashing hunger for revenge, the storm of his blood; and that is the agony that makes the blood boil, from that nature revolts, every fibre quivers in rebellion and anguish. So *strong* is the will in him whom people would make out to be a weakling, that he endures this torture in the fear and virtue of his duty. What he rails at as 'pigeon-livered,' when the mortal nature, impatient of pain, weary of suffering, cries out in him — all this is enduring courage, the courage of reason, springing from reverence for a holy duty and from devotion thereto."

prototype in the story on which our dramatist based his plot. He has that old Norse blood in his veins, and it prompted the impulse to sweep to his revenge when he first heard the revelation of his uncle's guilt; as later, at intervals, it burns within him, inspiring bloody thoughts, and *words* that are daggers, though they lead to no murderous stroke except when poor Polonius is the victim. That was a dreadful mistake, but, had it been the King, it would have been a worse one. Hamlet *cannot* kill the King, not from lack of nerve or will to strike the blow, but because this would not be true revenge from a rational and philosophical point of view, and from Shakespeare's point of view as a dramatic artist.[1]

The proofs of his uncle's guilt are only circumstantial, even after he has resorted to the test of the play. The case against Claudius is strong, but not absolutely decisive; or, if decisive for himself and Horatio, it is by no means so for anybody else. When he overhears the King at prayer he has, indeed, the criminal's evidence against himself, but no other person has heard it, as none heard the testimony of the Ghost. If he had killed Claudius even then, he would have assumed the united functions of witness, judge, and executioner; passing sentence and executing it on evidence known only to himself, and upon no indifferent person, but the brother of his father and the husband of his mother.

Suppose, however, that he had been the fool or the madman to do this, what would have been the consequences? He himself would very likely have been killed at the same time or soon afterwards. It is doubtful if he could have escaped from the palace or the city with his life. And what then? Claudius would be regarded

[1] As Werder remarks, Hamlet's real duty is "not to crush the King at once, — he could commit no greater blunder, — but to bring him to confession, to unmask and convict him. . . . As things stand, truth and justice can be known only from one mouth, the mouth of the crowned criminal. . . . And therefore killing the King *before* the proof is adduced would be, not killing the guilty, but killing the *proof*, . . . the murder of justice!"

as a martyr, Hamlet as a madman, or worse, — a regicide, whose only conceivable motive was the usurpation of the throne he had stained with blood. Horatio, the only person who could say a word in behalf of the prince, could not hope to turn the current of popular feeling setting so strong against him.

But suppose that Hamlet had not been killed or shut up in a madhouse after assassinating the King. Suppose he is allowed the opportunity of explaining and justifying his deed before the court or the people. He declares that Claudius was a murderer. What proof of this? He can only repeat what the Ghost has told him. Will the second-hand testimony of the spectre be accepted? Will it avail him to call Horatio and Marcellus to corroborate his story? They had indeed seen the Ghost, but they had not heard his message. Of this, after all, there is only the testimony of Hamlet himself; the criminal is the only witness in his own defence. The Ghost cannot be called into court. Hamlet goes to the gallows or the madhouse, not to the throne which he will be supposed to have committed murder to gain, trumping up the ghost story to justify it.

The effect upon the Queen is also to be considered. This is a factor in Hamlet's hesitation to kill the King, which few of the critics have recognized. The Ghost had said: —

> "But howsoever thou pursuest this act,
> Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
> Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven
> And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
> To prick and sting her."

Hamlet does not appear to regard this as merely a warning not to kill his mother. The reference to her conscience seems to have suggested — unless his filial affection prompted it — that he must make her see her guilt, and wean her affection from Claudius, before he strikes at *him*. This is the keynote of the remarkable scene (iii. 4) in which he sets her sin before her with such terrible force, until her conscience *is* awakened, and her eyes, turned into her

very soul, see "such black and grained spots as will not leave their tinct."

But, if he had killed the King before that scene, how would it have affected the Queen, ignorant, as she was, that Claudius had murdered her former husband?[1] She, too, would have viewed Claudius as a martyr, and Hamlet as a madman. Her love for Claudius would be only the stronger. Adulterous at first, then legitimized by marriage, it would seem to be almost sanctified by his death. Her infidelity to the elder Hamlet would be only the more complete.

Hamlet has seen all this in his mind's eye, and therefore the King has been permitted to live. The prince *dares* not kill him — not for any subjective reasons, but for such as are purely objective.

[1] This has been matter of dispute, but for myself I feel absolutely sure that she was not privy to the murder of her husband. In the 1st quarto her innocence in this respect is distinctly declared. In the chamber scene she says to Hamlet: —

> "But as I have a soul I swear by heaven
> I never knew of this most horrid murder."

In the revision of the play this is omitted, like scores of other passages, but nothing is inserted which indicates that the conception of the character is changed in this particular. The Ghost does not hint that the Queen was an accomplice in the murder, and his extreme compassion for her would be quite incredible if she had been; neither does Hamlet appear to have any such suspicion, though he says: —

> "A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother,
> As kill a king, and marry with his brother!"

But this does not directly ascribe the killing to *her*, though she takes it so, and exclaims in startled amazement at the charge, "As kill a king!" In the long and bitter denunciation of his mother's conduct which follows, Hamlet says nothing that intimates her complicity in the murder.

The cause of his inaction is not in himself, but in his environment — to use a word somewhat overworked in these latter days.

What then shall Hamlet do? Precisely what Shakespeare makes him do, — watch and wait, — or "drift," as Lowell expresses it; but from necessity, not, as Lowell assumes, from choice, "that he may escape so much the longer the dreaded necessity of really doing anything at all."

Hamlet chafes and frets under the enforced inactivity. He blames himself for it, as we have seen, with many morbid self-reproaches; but he is in the grip of inexorable Fate — or over-ruling but all-wise Providence we may better call it. Toward the last he sees this himself, recognizing "the divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will."

I have said that the killing of Polonius was a dreadful mistake. Hamlet forgot himself for the moment, though we can hardly wonder at it. He has just spared the life of the adulterous murderer, and come to his mother's chamber in the hope that, by setting up a mirror before her wherein she may see herself, he may reach her heart if it be made of penetrable stuff. The Queen, frightened at the impetuosity of his first appeal, cries out, and the cry is echoed from behind the tapestry, as Hamlet supposes, by the adulterer and murderer himself. It is more than his self-restraint can endure, that here, in the very place where the sin of his mother had probably been committed, her seducer should now be playing the spy upon him; and in the hot, impulsive rage of the maddening discovery the hasty thrust through the arras is made, and Polonius falls — not the King!

Hamlet has now done what the critics are impatient to have him do. He has struck at the King, and what is the result? A new burden added to that which already weighs him down; fresh complications, further perplexities, in the problem he has to solve. But he has learned anew the lesson of patience, of submission to Fate, or Providence, — the divinity that shapes our ends. It is this determination of Hamlet to risk no more rough-hewing of his destiny

which explains the readiness with which he allows himself to be shipped for England. Some have assumed that the attack of the pirates was prearranged by Hamlet; but this is disproved by his subsequent talk about it with Horatio. He has no plan for circumventing the treachery which he suspects. He trusts to Fate — or Providence — to make that treachery defeat itself, and hoist the enginer with his own petar. The mistake he has made in killing Polonius was bad enough; but, as I have said, to have killed the King would have been infinitely worse. Accident, as it appears, has saved him from *that;* but he must risk no such mad rashness again. The King takes advantage of it to press his departure for England. Hamlet cannot object to this, though it looks like running away in the midst of the battle and leaving the King master of the field. Let Fate see to that![1]

And Fate does see to it. When to our poor eyes evil seems triumphant, events begin to move swiftly and irresistibly to its defeat and destruction. Hamlet is passive, but Fate sets him on the shores of Denmark again, and the tragedy marches rapidly to its

[1] Werder says: "Forgetting the strict obligation of his task, Hamlet gives full course to his thirst for vengeance, and is carried away into the grave error of plunging his sword through the tapestry. . . . Instead of Polonius, had it been the King whom he had stabbed, what would he have not brought upon himself! . . . Fearfully near has he come, out of blind rage, to ruining his whole cause, ruining it in the most shameful and blundering manner. Accident alone, so to speak, has saved him. This consideration above all things must be brought home to him by the serious mistake which he has made, warning him and bidding him beware how he comes any nearer to so fatal an end; more pressingly and emphatically than ever must he feel himself obliged to proceed slowly, with redoubled foresight, with still more marked 'procrastination'; he must in fact feel himself, with a shudder, driven to a standstill. . . . And thus he quietly submits — as indeed he must — to be sent off to England. . . . He has, by a blunder, almost lost the game, has played into the hands of his opponent."

close. Hamlet's error in killing Polonius meets its just penalty in the madness and death of his Ophelia; but, by a gracious mingling of mercy with judgment, the Divinity that shapes the end in spite of man's blind rough-hewing makes that error also the means by which Hamlet is at last enabled to discharge his dread duty with unstained soul. The killing of Polonius is the indirect cause of the King's plot to murder Hamlet with the help of Laertes, who, as he dies, the victim of his base complicity in the plot, exposes the criminality of its royal author. The guilt of Claudius is unkennelled at last, and it can be guiltlessly avenged.

As Werder says, that stab through the tapestry by which Polonius fell is the "decisive thing" that finally "gives to Hamlet's cause the victory; . . . the *miss* that Hamlet makes, that it is which *hits;* but — because it is his *miss* — not *his* hit, but the hit of Fate. . . .

"Hamlet cannot choose his plan, for it strides on before him. . . . He suffers himself to be led; for that he is intelligent and passive enough — passive in the large sense that he understands the difficulty of his task, understands in fear and agony; and thus he goes straight into the heart of the crime. And by no means *slowly!* . . . The tragedy knows of no delay. It drives ahead in storm! The fulfilment, the judgment, and the death also of the King, come even quicker than Hamlet and we can foresee. With one stroke all is fulfilled — in overwhelming surprise!

"Even now the King makes no confession; even Death opens his mouth only for a lie, not for the confession of the truth; but his own confession is no longer indispensable. Laertes confesses for him, and the corpse of the Queen and the blood of the Prince, all these victims proclaim aloud the murderer to all the world; now also Ophelia, and Polonius, and Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern, testify against him. All these dead now form the chorus to the solo of the Ghost; and when Horatio comes forward to tell Hamlet's story and to explain his cause to the unsatisfied, he will produce in all his hearers the conviction which he himself and we have, and the story which the Grave tells will be an unquestionable truth

for the world, — now, when Hamlet himself exists no more on earth and is no more a party to the scene."

And what can I add to this except the words of Horatio: —

"Good night, sweet prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!"

The Moral of the Play

The lesson of *Hamlet*, or one great lesson at least, is expressed in the lines I have quoted more than once: —

"There 's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

A terrible and perplexing duty is demanded of Hamlet, who is in a measure unequal to it and unprepared for it. He does not on that account shirk it, but devotes himself entirely to its performance, thrusting aside all that is dearest to him and that might divert him from his task. The path before him is rough and dark, and at times he stumbles and misses his way; but he presses on as best he can. When at length further progress seems hopeless, Fate, or Providence, the divinity that shapes the end which he knows not how to attain comes to his aid, making his one great mistake the means of finally solving the problem that baffles him. Hamlet dies, the victim of his impatience and rashness, but his duty is done. The guilty suffer the just penalty of their crimes, the stern injunction of the paternal spirit is fulfilled. If we do not see the lesson of this, we should not see it though an angel came down from heaven to expound it.

The Time-Analysis of the Play

This is summed up by Mr. P. A. Daniel (*Trans. of New Shakspere Society*, 1877–79, p. 214) as follows: —

"The time of the Play is seven days represented on the stage — or eight if the reader prefers to assign a separate day to the last scene — with two intervals.

Day 1. Act I. sc. i. to iii.
" 2. Act I. sc. iv. and v.
An interval of rather more than two months.
" 3. Act II. sc. i. and ii.
" 4. Act III. sc. i. to iv., Act IV. sc. i. to iii.
" 5. Act IV. sc. iv.
An interval — a week?
" 6. Act IV. sc. v. to vii.
" 7. Act V. sc. i. and ii."

List of Characters in the Play

In this list the numbers in parentheses indicate the lines the characters have in each scene.

King: i. 2(93); ii. 2(39); iii. 1(40), 2(7), 3(50); iv. 1(34), 3(44), 5(67), 7(141); v. 1(9), 2(27). Whole no. 551.

Hamlet: i. 2(103), 4(68), 5(99); ii. 2(302); iii. 1(84), 2(245), 3(24), 4(176); iv. 2(23), 3(26), 4(47); v. 1(142), 2(230). Whole no. 1569.

Polonius: i. 2(4), 3(68); ii. 1(87), 2(146); iii. 1(23), 2(13), 3(9), 4(7). Whole no. 357.

Horatio: i. 1(100), 2(50), 4(26), 5(17); iii. 2(9); iv. 5(2), 6(28); v. 1(12), 2(54). Whole no. 298.

Laertes: i. 2(7), 3(53); iv. 5(48), 7(47); v. 1(18), 2(35). Whole no. 208.

Voltimand: i. 2(1); ii. 2(21). Whole no. 22.

Cornelius: i. 2(1). Whole no. 1.

Rosencrantz: ii. 2(50); iii. 1(12), 2(15), 3(14); iv. 2(9), 3(4), 4(1). Whole no. 105.

Guildenstern: ii. 2(21); iii. 1(5), 2(24), 3(5); iv. 2(2). Whole no. 57.

Osric: v. 2(56). Whole no. 56.

1st Gentleman: iv. 5(12). Whole no. 12.

2d Gentleman: iv. 5(11). Whole no. 11.

1st Priest: v. 1(13). Whole no. 13.

Marcellus: i. 1(46), 2(6), 4(7), 5(8). Whole no. 67.

Bernardo: i. 1(34), 2(4). Whole no. 38.

Francisco: i. 1(10). Whole no. 10.

Reynaldo: ii. 1(15). Whole no. 15.

1st Player: ii. 2(48); iii. 2(3). Whole no. 51.

Player King: iii. 2(44). Whole no. 44.

Lucianus: iii. 2(6). Whole no. 6.

Fortinbras: iv. 4(8); v. 2(19). Whole no. 27.

Captain: iv. 4(12). Whole no. 12.

1st Sailor: iv. 6(5). Whole no. 5.

1st Clown: v. 1(107). Whole no. 107.

2d Clown: v. 1(19). Whole no. 19.

1st Ambassador: v. 2(6). Whole no. 6.

Lord: v. 2(10). Whole no. 10.

Servant: iv. 6(1). Whole no. 1.

Messenger: iv. 7(5). Whole no. 5.

Ghost: i. 5(89); iii. 4(6). Whole no. 95.

Queen: i. 2(10); ii. 2(20); iii. 1(9), 2(4), 4(47); iv. 1(12), 5(16), 7(21); v. 1(12), 2(7). Whole no. 158.

Ophelia: i. 3(20); ii. 1(28); iii. 1(33), 2(18); iv. 5(76). Whole no. 175.

Player Queen: iii. 2(30). Whole no. 30.

"*Prologue*": iii. 2(3). Whole no. 3.

"*All*": i. 2(1); iii. 2(1); iv. 5(3); v. 1(1), 2(1). Whole no. 7.

In the above enumeration, parts of lines are counted as whole lines, making the total in the play greater than it is. The actual

number of lines in each scene (Globe edition numbering) is as follows: i. 1(175), 2(258), 3(136), 4(91), 5(191); ii. 1(119), 2(633); iii. 1(196), 2(417), 3(98), 4(217); iv. 1(45), 2(33), 3(70), 4(66), 5(220), 6(34), 7(195); v. 1(322), 2(414). Whole number in the play, 3930.

Hamlet is the longest of the plays. *Richard III.* comes next, with 3618 lines; then *Troilus and Cressida*, with 3496; 2 *Henry IV.*, with 3446; *Coriolanus*, with 3410; and *Henry V.* with 3380. The *Comedy of Errors* is the shortest, with 1778 lines; next, *The Tempest*, with 2065; and *Macbeth*, with 2109 (much the shortest of the great tragedies).

Hamlet speaks more lines (1569) than any other character in any one play. Richard III. comes next, with 1161; then Iago, with 1117, and Henry V. with 1063. Of the characters who appear in more than one play, Henry V., as prince and king, has the most lines (including 616 in 1 *Henry IV.* and 308 in 2 *Henry IV.*), or 1987 in all. Falstaff comes next with 1895 in all (719 in 1 *Henry IV.*, 688 in 2 *Henry IV.*, and 488 in the *Merry Wives*).

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